BALLERINA OF THE YEAR

SOVIET BALLET NEWS FROM MOSCOW

BALLET TODAY

NOVEMBER, 1959

TWO SHILLINGS

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EDITOR
ESTELLE HERF

Ballet TODAY

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ABOUT the middle of the nineteenth century, Marie Taglioni, the famous ballerina, made her way into the watchmaker's business of a certain Charles Frodsham and made a purchase of a clock. This young man had been born in the trade, His great grandfather, William Frodsham. a highly reputed horologist, had been appointed by the Board of Admiralty in 1763 to investigate the Harrison Timepiece, the prizewinning chronometer eventually used by the Navy for navigation.

It was therefore appropriate and in keeping with the closely observed traditions of this old-established business, whose founders were supplying chronometers to Nelson's Navy at the time of Trafalgar, that the opening ceremony of their new showrooms in the Brompton Road on the 6th of October was performed by a twentieth-century prima ballerina—our own Alicia Markova. "Moreover" said Mr. Frank L. Thirkell, managing director of Frodsham's, "who knows better than a ballerina the importance of split timing" ?

The same Charles Frodsham also bought the business of Vulliamy, who held the Royal appointment, and the firm of Frodsham have held it to succeeding monarchs ever since. Today their horologists call twice weekly at the Royal Palaces to wind and adjust the 300 clocks belonging to the Queen.

* *Frodsham's have been established over 200 years, but in 1940 their premises in South Molton Street were bombed and most of the firm's records destroyed. The exact date of Taglioni's visit is therefore uncertain.*

THE ROYAL BALLET

On November 14th at the matinee performance, Anya Linden and David Blair will dance together for the first time in eight months as Sylvia and Aminta in Frederick Ashton's *Sylvia.* Another very important date for Miss Linden will be December 1, when she makes her debut in *The Firebird.*

November 26th is to be another Royal occasion. H.R.H. The Duchess of Kent has agreed to attend a Gala Matinée of Ballet in aid of the Royal Academy of Dancing. In an earlier issue we reported Dame Margot Fonteyn's annual address as President of the Academy, in which she said that she hoped this Gala would become an annual event. Several international artists have promised to take part. The Gala will take place at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, and the Chairman of the Gala Committee will be Mary, Duchess of Roxburghe. The Gala given in aid of the Academy's funds in November 1958, also a royal occasion, resulted in a profit of £5,800.

Having had a corps de ballet of London Guardsmen (Festival Ballet's *London Morning* by Noel Coward) we are now to have a corps de ballet of London Policemen in a new ballet by John Cranko entitled *Sweeney Todd.* This will have its world première at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, on Thursday December 10th.

Described by John Cranko as a ' Ghoulish Comedy ' the ballet is based upon the famous

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Editor's Log

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Continued from page 3

Victorian melodrama of the Demon Barber of Fleet Street. The leading role of Sweeney Todd will be danced by Donald Britton and Margaret Hill will take the part of Mrs. Lovett, who made the pies from Sweeney Todd's victims. There is to be a heroine played by Elizabeth Anderton, her boy friend Mark Ingestre played by Desmond Doyle, and his Indian Army friend Colonel Jeffry played by Ian Hamilton.

Scenery and costumes have been designed by Alix Stone and the music composed by Malcolm Arnold.

THE FORGIVING RACE

Writers cannot be expected to regard their editors with wholehearted approval all the time. Unaware of the heart-stopping emergencies which can arise at the time of going to press, of the "copy" which arrived late, of the mad melée of last-minute proof reading, they gloomily note that the important article they sent in has been relegated to page 20 instead of page 6, and that a comma is missing in the middle of one of the important passages. However, they are a forgiving race, as I realised recently when three of my critics met up in New York. There was George Jackson, our critic until recently in Chicago, Dr. Wilfried Hofmann who for six years covered the Munich scene until he took up his fellowship at Harvard University, and Hope Sheridan, our permanent critic in New York. They met at the Museum of Modern Art and sent me a postcard which they all signed. They wrote on it "this re-union calls for a line to let you know you are in our fondest thoughts."

JOHN GILPIN

Some time ago I reported that John Gilpin, heard singing at a party, had favourably impressed a VIP in this craziest of all sections of the entertainment world. Obviously the impression created was a lasting one, for, looking back over the events I missed during my holiday, I find that John made his debut on B.B.C.TV on September 8th as a singer in the male quartet 'Stately Homes of England'. Some people have *everything*.

NORMAN DIXON

The next Sunday Ballet Club performance has been postponed until the 13th December and will take place in the New Theatre. Norman Dixon will be putting on a new ballet with a contemporary theme dealing with the problems of youth of to-day. Antoinette Sibley and Gary Burne are expected to take the leading roles. The music is to be from a jazz score by Johnny Mandel from the film *I Want to Live*.

As I reported last month, Norman Dixon choreographed for the operas *May Night*, *La Traviata* and *Faust* when the Welsh National Opera Company gave a short season recently in Cardiff. The Company played to full houses at all performances.

WOLFGANG BRUNNER

In July I gave news of a new musical to be devised by Wolfgang Brunner for the Basle Festival in July, in which his wife Belinda Wright, dancing with Jelko Yuresha, would head a company of 34 dancers. Mr. Brunner has now written to tell me that he has taken over the Swiss Theatre Dance School, attached to the Opera in Zurich, an appointment which will leave him sufficient time to continue with his work as a choreographer.

Mr. Brunner has written some very interesting notes on his experiences in producing *Es Lebe Das Leben* for the Basle Festival, an opportunity, he says, that comes only once in a lifetime, to experiment on such a large scale in the field of entertainment for such vast audiences. Twenty-five thousand athletes came from all over the country, and the budget for the play ran to almost £17,000. An article on this by Mr. Brunner will be published in our next issue.

ROBERT HELPMANN

Robert Helpmann is producing *Aladdin* and a new play for Christmas. Janet Sinclair will be attending rehearsals and will write about these in our next issue.

FESTIVAL BALLET CHANGES

I wondered what Terry Gilbert was doing at the first night of the season at Covent Garden, seeing that Festival Ballet opened two days later. He told me after the show that his wife Selena Wylie had been rushed off to hospital with appendicitis, and that they had both decided to leave the Company. I hear that Keith Beckett has also left Festival Ballet.

ENGLISH GIRL IN RUSSIA

We have further news of Ann Stone, the little 14-year-old girl from Fulham, London, who gained a scholarship to the School of the Bolshoi Ballet.

Ann arrived in Moscow on September 12th after a stay of some 10 days in Leningrad. She was given a thorough medical overhaul and after acclimatisation over some days, danced before the Committee of the Bolshoi Ballet, consisting of the leading members of the Bolshoi including Madame Ulanova and Asef Messerer. "The result of Ann's examination has exceeded our hopes," says the Principal of the Doreen English School, Fulham, where Ann has been a pupil since the age of seven. Ann has been placed in Class VII.

The youngest pupil accepted by the School is nine. There are nine classes and the age of pupils in Class 9 varies between 18 and 20 years. The verdict is; that Ann's dancing is brilliant, and she has been placed in charge of the leading Bolshoi teacher, Sulamith Messerer, who is now her personal tutor.

Personal tutors have been seconded to Ann in other subjects including those connected with ballet, such as music, etc., to help her develop these to the high level of her dancing.

Sulamith Messerer is a famous teacher in Russia, having graduated in the Bolshoi School and was a leading ballerina herself. Beryl Grey, the Covent Garden ballerina, who was invited to dance a season with the Bolshoi Ballet, in her book *Red Curtain Up*, pays tribute to Sulamith Messerer as a wonderful teacher; that her concentration is such that an atmosphere of "nothing else in the world matters" abounds while she teaches.

Ann writes that everyone is very kind to her, in fact she says, they are "too kind." Ann is, of course, looking forward to May when she comes home on holiday; she misses home very much.

Attention is drawn to the appeal for the Ann Stone Ballet Fund.

Money required for clothing, pocket money, letter writing, holiday return fare to England and many other items usual in such circumstances.

Contributions may be sent to Ann Stone Ballet Fund, Westminster Bank Ltd., 45 Fulham Broadway, S.W.6.

AN APPEAL

Miss Frances Edwards would be grateful if teachers of stage and Ballet dancing will ask their pupils and students to send to her at Hilbre, Abergele Road, Rhuddlan, Rhyl, Flintshire all their old white and pink stockings, opera hose, and tights when they are too shabby for further wear, for use in the making of dolls, which she sends to children in Hospitals. It does not matter how torn or laddered they are, though if possible they should have the feet on them, even if they are much darned and worn. They can be made of silk, rayon, nylon, nylon crepe stretch, lisle, fishnet or cotton but *not* wool. All parcels will be gratefully acknowledged, and the postage will be refunded.

SUBSCRIBERS PLEASE NOTE

If your subscription expires in December will you help to lessen the work which always accrues at the end of a year by notifying us well before Christmas if you wish to renew. We are busy cooking up some entirely new features for 1960 and can promise you an interesting New Year.

News from here and there

AMERICA

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE has announced the three choreographers for four of its next season's productions. Alexandra Danilova and Dania Krupska will create the dances for Johann Strauss' " Gypsy Baron ". Miss Danilova will stage an interpolated court ballet to the " Emperor Waltz " and Miss Krupska will be responsible for the Hungarian peasant dances in the first two acts. Zachary Solov will create three new ballets for " Aida " and choreograph new ballets in " Faust " and " Manon ".

THE ROBERT JOFFREY THEATRE BALLET commenced its 1959-60 season in September at the John Hancock Theatre in Boston. The repertoire this season includes *Yesterday's Papers*, a new ballet by Dirk Sanders; Jeffrey's *Pas de Deesses*; the Peasant Pas de Deux from *Giselle* and a revival of Antony Tudor's *Soiree Musicale*, mounted for the company by Peggy Van Praagh. The Tudor work has not previously been seen in the United States.

Grants and Awards

THE JOHN HAY WHITNEY OPPORTUNITY FELLOWSHIPS for 1959 have been awarded to six young artists in music and dance. This year, the foundation awarded fellowships to fifty-two persons of twenty-three states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. The 1959 winners in music are Donald Barrett, pianist; Debria Brown and Thomas Carey, singers; and Anna Archer and James Truitte, dancers.

THE FORD FOUNDATION has announced a new programme to bring young professionals in the creative arts to the United States for six months' study. Six to eight promising young artists in the fields of creative writing, dance, design, music, painting, sculpture and the theatre will come to the United States each year under a four-year programme.

Now Honour for Hurok

SOL HUROK was selected winner of the sixth annual award of the Sam S. Schubert Foundation for " outstanding individual contribution to the New York legitimate theatre " during the 1958-59 season. The impresario presented in New York the Bolshoi and Beryozka Dance Companies from Russia, the Theatre National Populaire from Paris, the Old Vic and the Scots and Grenadier Guards from Great Britain and the Spanish Ballet of Roberto Iglesias from Madrid.

EGYPT

The festival season in Alexandra has commenced a little late but amply recompensed those who produced it during one month.

Spectacles at the Theatre de Verdure were followed by the Ballet of Alexandria, the dancers of Mlle Dora Salone and of Mme Gorilovich.

The next Season in Cairo begins in November with the Ballet Troup of Leningrad comprising 88 artists with a world wide reputation, who will give a series of presentations during three weeks, then in Alexandria for one week.—WALENS.

LONDON

WORLD CONFERENCE IN KINETOGRAPHY LABAN

At the invitation of the Trustees of the Laban Art of Movement Centre, representatives from many countries met together in August at the first World Conference of Kinetography Laban.

This form of Dance Notation was introduced by Rudolf Laban many years ago when he was a dancer, choreographer and teacher in Germany. Between 1930 and 1934 when Laban was Director of Movement at the Prussian State Theatres, for the first time in history the Berlin State Opera employed a "kinetographer," that is a person whose sole task was to record in notation the ballets in the repertoire. At that time 150 dances and ballet scenes were notated, most of which were subsequently destroyed during the war, but a few were preserved in Laban's own Archives.

Now the use of Kinetography Laban has spread all over the world and into the many spheres of Modern Dance, Classical Ballet, Folk Dance, Musicals, Gymnastics, Industry and Physiotherapy.

Representatives from Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Yugoslavia, Iceland, America and Great Britain, with observers from France and Italy, met together to report on activities, to discuss means of achieving unification, and problems of publication and copyright.

During the Conference, foundations were laid for the forming of the " International Council of Kinetography Laban " which will work in association with all matters arising from the use of Kinetography and its future developments.

The Chairman at the Conference was Lisa Ullman, Director of The Laban Art of Movement Centre, Addlestone, Surrey. Taking part—Albrecht Knust, Germany; Irmgard Bartenieff (representing Dance Notation Bureau, New York) U.S.A.; Ingeborg Baier, Poland and East Berlin; Diana Baddeley, England; Jacqueline Haas, France; Minerva Jonsdottir, Iceland; June Kemp (representing Sigurd Leeder) England, Dr. Emma Lugossy, Hungary, Vera Maletic, Yugoslavia, Valerie Preston, England, Maria Szentpal, Hungary.

BRUSSELS

BOOK OF THE BRUSSELS EXHIBITION

There are to be eight volumes published on the Brussels World Exhibition held in 1958. Each volume will present one particular aspect of the Exhibition: architecture, gardens, arts, science, congresses, etc. Each section will be written by experts and will therefore be of genuine documentary interest. The volumes may be purchased separately. The volume on the arts will contain a section on the visits of the Royal Ballet and the Bolshoi Ballet, accompanied by photographs. The price of this one volume will be 250 Belgian francs, and contain 192 pages. The eight volumes and the Atlas of Plans will cost 1,670 Belgian francs. Orders may be given to the Commissariat General of the 1958 Exhibition, Avenue de Meisse, Brussels, and the language chosen (English, French or Dutch) should be indicated. Payment should be made by transfer to Postal Cheque Account No. 2630.31 of " Exposition de Bruxelles 1958 ".

Volumes will be forwarded post free on publication.

BRISBANE

Charles Lisner, whose new theatre, The Academy, was opened in Brisbane recently is now forming his own permanent professional company, and is to announce the date of his opening season soon. *Serenade for Strings* to Tchaikovsky's music, and *Peter and the Wolf* (Prokofiev) will be in their repertoire, together with *The Gift* for which Mr. Lisner has written the music and provided the choreography.

The Company is to have a small permanent nucleus which will give regular seasons at their own theatre, and they will also appear on television. In this way all-the-year-round employment will be provided for a group of Brisbane dancers, and use the services of Australian choreographers, designers and composers. This is the first ballet company to make Brisbane its base.

WELCOME NEWS

As regular readers will know *Ballet Today* circulation is world-wide, and we have our own critics in London, Paris, New York, Moscow, Amsterdam, Venice, Tokyo, Cairo, Chicago, Brisbane, Johannesburg, Auckland, Copenhagen, Monte Carlo. In due course others will be appointed in major cities throughout the world. Already we can claim that our publication has the widest foreign news coverage of any magazine on ballet.

We welcome news from any part of the world; from the major companies we would like to have details of their seasons at home and foreign tours; from dancers details of new developments in their careers, guest artist appearances, and within the limits of available space we will do our best to print it all. Photographs are always welcome, but if you wish to have these returned or receive a reply from the Editor please send a stamped addressed envelope to cover postage (an International postage coupon can be obtained by those living abroad).

LONDON REVIEWS

JEROME ROBBINS COMPANY

by FERNAU HALL

THE London debut of the long-heralded *Ballets U.S.A.* at the Piccadilly Theatre on 14th September was one of the big events of the theatrical year. With so much interest aroused—and a company with so much to offer—the season could easily have lasted six months or more, without a change of bill. But, as the soldiers say, that was not the object of the exercise: the company in fact is touring a large number of European countries (on both sides of the Iron Curtain) in order to introduce to them one of the most stimulating facets of American culture, and it can only spare one week for London.

With the production for Ballet Theatre of *Fancy Free* (1944) and *Interplay* (1945) Jerome Robbins showed a marked flair for comedy and jazz and established himself unmistakably as the leading American choreographer working with ballet dancers. In the field of modern dance Martha Graham and others had already done a great deal to establish an American tradition, and Jerome Robbins was able to draw strength from this: in fact all his choreography shows a strong modern-dance influence. In 1949 he joined the New York City Ballet as Associated Artistic Director, and has created a good many ballets for this company: the early ones (such as *The Age of Anxiety* and *The Cage*) were obscure and disappointing attempts at avant-garde symbolism; but he returned to his true nature with ballets such as *Afternoon of a Faun* (1953) and *The Concert* (1956), both being light-hearted and witty ballets forming part of the current repertoire of *Ballets: U.S.A.*

Significantly enough the one ballet in the repertoire with no element of wit or satire—*Moves*—was also the least impressive. This was danced in silence, without scenery, in practice costume, and was completely abstract, with no element of story. This type of dancing has great possibilities (in fact Birgit Akesson devoted years to it) and Jerome Robbins, in a pas de deux for Erin Martin and the South African dancer, Michael Maule, suggested that he was going to open up a new world of movement in rhythms quite unlike those of music: for a few moments strange lifts and odd combinations of arms and legs of the two dancers, together with flickering rhythmic impulses, gave an exciting effect. But this did not last: for most of the ballet Jerome Robbins, put together familiar movements from ballet and modern dance in rhythmic patterns which were intelligent but nothing more.

Afternoon of a Faun incorporated a marvellous idea: the transposition of the theme of Mallarmé's poem, Debussy's music and Nijinsky's ballet to a ballet classroom, with an imaginary mirror along the footlights. This took advantage of the fact that ballet dancers gazing at themselves in the classroom mirror (to improve their line) inevitably tend to develop elements of narcissism—and some male dancers also have strong elements of the faun in them. On the 14th September we saw what was probably the most convincing faun since Nijinsky: John Jones, a handsome Negro dancer with the physique of a Greek god, looking so impressive that he rivetted attention even when he did not move a single one of his magnificent muscles. In fact his slow lazy movements had just the quality needed by the theme and the music. Wilma Curley also looked most beautiful as the nymph: there were moments when they danced together, both gazing dreamily straight out at their own images in the mirror, which were really amusing, and at the same time slightly eerie in a surrealist way. But Jerome Robbins failed to make the most of his theme, possibly because he kept everything at the same slow tempo—whereas his imagination seems to take fire at fast tempi.

N. Y. Export; Op. Jazz, on the other hand, was largely in fast tempo, and made a very powerful impact—except in one slow serious pas de deux which was out of key with this boisterous work. Jazz dancing is now highly developed in America: as the programme says, "Its vitality has reached a new high, developing and expanding in form and style from the major and basic contributions of the Negro and Latin-American." A number of choreographers in both the modern dance and ballet worlds have done fine work in this style; but Robbins excels them all because of his strong sense of structure, his inventiveness, his keen sense of line, and above all his marvellous feeling for dynamics. He takes ideas from every imaginable type of dance—from a Javanese court dance to a Serbian kolo—but adapts these to jazz rhythms with such skill that they look perfectly at home alongside African, Latin-American, modern dance and ballet movements. With such a talented company (all of them soloists, chosen from hundreds of applicants) one commits an injustice in singling out any one dancer; but one danseuse very clearly stood out: Patricia Dunn, whose ancestors came to America from Korea some generations ago, and whose face is very Korean. This remarkable artist gives all her movements something of the same extraordinary precision and meaning that Martha Graham's dancer Yuriko gives to *her* movements.

Robert Prince's score showed a keen understanding both of jazz and jazz dancing; there was one scene in particular, in which the music was confined only to percussion in great variety, which represented a further development of the trend which began in the twenties when serious composers such as Stravinsky took ideas from the African polyrhythms of jazz. Ben Shahn is one of the finest living American painters, and his sets were magnificently right—changing from scene to scene to suit the changing mood. His delightful abstract set for the last scene (*Theme, Variations and Fugue*) was a gaily coloured abstract chequerboard, suggesting very strongly that jazz dancing is the exact equivalent of the colourful abstract painting which is now the favourite style of young American painters. The company lost its sets and costumes in an air crash, and Ben Shahn flew from New York to supervise the preparation of new sets in time for the London opening.

The Concert, which ended the programme, proved to be one of the funniest ballets to be seen in London for many a long year. It had much the same idea behind it as *Gala Performance*, poking fun at classical ballet; everything was done in a fresh and genuinely witty way with a strong element of typically *New Yorker* craziness, and the roars of laughter from the audience almost drowned the music at times. One of the best group items was a dance in the manner of a Petipa ballet which took the form of a corps-de-ballet dancer's nightmare: constantly the dancers found themselves with an arm up when it should be down, or a body bent forward when it should be back. The craziest item might be described as the phoney character dance to end all phoney character dances, led by a weird figure (somewhat reminiscent of Groucho Marx) wearing horn-rimmed glasses and a bowler hat and smoking a cigar (splendidly danced by Michael Maule). Among the solo figures, it was delightful to recognise that wonderful comedienne Muriel Bentley as a romantic culture-vulture: and Patricia Dunn was equally amusing as a prim housewife.

In his article published in the previous issue of *Ballet Today* Jerome Robbins very properly stressed the fact that the programme covers a wide variety of techniques, styles and theatrical approaches that have been developed in America, and that the dancers are called on to show great versatility. But he made no mention of a strange and important omission: the whole dramatic aspect of ballet, an aspect which has been very important to Robbins himself. In the repertoire of his present company we look in vain for anything corresponding to the gay adventures of the three sailors in his ballet *Fancy Free* or the tense, menacing drama of the best scenes in his " musical " *West Side Story*. This omission of drama is characteristic of Robbins' present artistic

policy: in the same way he chose as a fifth ballet for the current repertoire the abstract ballet *Interplay* (not performed in England), and when he produced his satiric ballet *The Concert* he devised some wonderfully comic episodes but excluded them from the final version because they did not seem *to him* to fit in—whereas he included some episodes (such as " Butterflies " and " Raindrops ") which were not amusing at all, and detracted from the impact of the ballet as a whole.

Such anomalies as these are always found when a choreographer directs his own company: the fact is that the artistic policy of a choreographer-director is bound in some respect to reflect his current artistic preoccupations and inner conflicts rather than the need of the public (and the dancers) for well-balanced programmes. At present Robbins is still apparently under the influence of George Balanchine and Lincoln Kirstein, directors of the New York City Ballet; he thinks of dancing as something supremely self-sufficient, and holds back his wonderful company from strong dramatic expression. In fact he is intent on keeping everything " cool ", even though this means turning his back on some of the finest of his own creative powers. But I cannot believe that he will always continue to think in this one-sided way, and I look forward to future visits of the company with more balanced repertoires.

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THE ROYAL BALLET ON TOUR

AT STREATHAM HILL

It is always stimulating to see a familiar company and familiar ballets in unfamiliar surroundings: one's eye is sharpened, and picks out details which before were swallowed up in the mass of undifferentiated activity on the verge of one's attention. I found this particularly true of the Streatham Hill Theatre, where the Dress Circle approaches the stage so closely that it offers a unique view of the performance: microscopic in detail, but cineramic in range.

To my regret I saw a programme which was all peaches-and-cream: *Pineapple Poll*, the *Don Quixote* pas de deux, *Façade*, and *The Prince of the Pagodas* Act III. The comic items and the divertissement would have gained a lot if they had been balanced by something dramatic.

Pineapple Poll was the least successful of the four items, largely because of unsatisfactory performances in the chief roles which resulted from a combination of poor casting and poor production. Doreen Wells is a talented artist with real gifts for comedy, but she seemed to have little idea how to tackle the role of Poll, acting and dancing it " straight " so that all the comic elements were lost. (Poll must be pathetic at times, but—like all soubrettes—she must also have a devil inside her.) Alexander Grant made Captain Belaye into a heavyweight bruiser, with nothing of the glamour needed to turn the heads of the girls. His facial expressions were particularly odd; in what was perhaps a misguided attempt to look stern, he often looked anguished. Ray Powell failed to make the pot-boy look either young or pathetic. Fortunately Rosemary Lindsay saved the day by gorgeous slap-stick clowning in the role of Mrs. Dimple, making herself look quite prehistoric with a splendid make-up which transformed her face completely, and carrying the role through with consistently goon-like hysteria.

The outstanding event of the evening was Merle Park's performance in the *Don Quixote* pas de deux. She can still afford to do a lot of work on this, emphasising the Spanish element by sharp shoulder movements à la Flamenca: but already it is captivating and exciting, working up to a splendid climax. I particularly admired the way she puts light-and-shade into her performance, making some details (such as the pas-de-cheval) rather delicate in order to give full value to the bravura of the big steps. If Merle Park is helped to maintain her present rate of progress she will undoubtedly become one of the world's greatest dancers.

Façade was distinguished by excellent performances in the Tango from Rosemary Lindsay and Alexander Grant; both showed a good make-up, and Grant in particular surprised one by managing to look sleek, sultry and very handsome, as well as dancing in a corresponding style. Nothing more unlike his wooden Belaye could possibly be imagined.

In the same way Doreen Wells made a fine come-back in the pas de six of Act III of *The Prince of the Pagodas*. She lacks the extraordinary magnetism of Merle Park (who dominated this pas de six without apparent effort) but she was clearly at home with the steps, interpreting them with precision and some elegance.

FERNAU HALL.

AT GOLDERS GREEN

ANTOINETTE SIBLEY IN SWAN LAKE

At their last matinée performance at Golders Green Hippodrome, the Royal Ballet presented *Swan Lake*, with Antoinette Sibley dancing Odette-Odile for the first time. Although one of the most talented young members of the company, she is comparatively inexperienced, and this exacting role, so early in her career, must have been an ordeal. Her partner, Michael Somes, was a tower of strength and reliability, but the same cannot be said of Emanuel Young, whose conducting (as usual) was unsympathetic and hesitant, particularly at the beginning of dances.

On the whole Antoinette Sibley gave a remarkable performance, graced by a lovely line and regal carriage of the head and arms. Her first mime sequence on meeting the Prince was clearly and dramatically done; but then she became remote and her performance—technically always of a high standard—was generally one of careful control, interspersed with occasional flashes of her own natural warmth of personality. She did her final bourrée off with quivering reluctance making a poignant effect at the end of the act.

In Act III she threw everything she had into her performance, dancing with attack and brilliance and despite an unsuccessful attempt at the 32 fouettés she carried on with courage, bringing the act to an exciting finish. She continued at this level in Act IV, giving a sincere and moving portrayal of the tragic Odette. Clearly the Royal Ballet has in Antoinette Sibley a Swan Queen with all the potentialities of greatness.

HELEN ROSS.

ON TELEVISION

Pineapple Poll is to be televised by B.B.C. on Sunday, 1st November. David Blair heads the cast as Captain Belaye, Merle Park is Pineapple Poll, and Stanley Holden the potboy, Jasper. The music is recorded, with Charles Mackerras conducting the London Symphony Orchestra. Margaret Dale is producing this televised version.

THE ROYAL BALLET season at Covent Garden opened on the 19th October with the world première of John Cranko's *Antigone*, starring Svetlana Beriosova and Michael Somes. This will be reviewed by **Fernau Hall** in our next issue together with the remainder of the season up to the time of going to press.

Next month our BALLET AROUND THE WORLD feature will be by Trudy Goth from Vienna.

For your leisure hours . . . .

PROGRAMMES FOR THE MONTH

THE ROYAL BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

3rd	Nov.	Tues.	(eve)	*Sylvia* (Nerina, Blair)
4th	,,	Wed.	(eve)	*Ballet Imperial* (Nerina, Blair) *Antigone* (Beriosova, Somes), *Façade* (Lindsay, Grant.)
7th	,,	Sat.	(Mat)	*Le Lac Des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
7th	,,	Sat.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
11th	,,	Wed.	(eve)	*Le Lac Des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes)
14th	,,	Sat.	(Mat)	*Sylvia* (Linden, Blair)
19th	,,	Thurs.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
21st	,,	Sat.	(Mat)	*Coppelia* (Nerina, Blair), *Façade* (Lindsay, Grant)
21st	,,	Sat.	(eve)	*Pineapple Poll* (Wells, Grant), *Symphonic Variations* (Fonteyn, Page, Lindsay, Somes, Shaw, Trecu), *Daphnis and Chloe* (Fonteyn, Somes)
24th	,,	Tues.	(eve)	*Pineapple Poll* (Park, Blair), *Symphonic Variations* (Fonteyn, Page, Lindsay, Somes, Shaw, Trecu), *Daphnis and Chloe* (Fonteyn, Somes)
27th	,,	Fri.	(eve)	*Pineapple Poll* (Park, Blair), *Symphonic Variations* (Fonteyn, Page, Lindsay, Somes, Shaw, Trecu), *Daphnis and Chloe* (Fonteyn, Somes)
28th	,,	Sat.	(eve)	*Le Lac Des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
30th	,,	Mon.	(eve)	*Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)

THE TOURING COMPANY OF THE ROYAL BALLET

W/c	2nd Nov.	*Globe, Stockton-on-Tees*
,,	9th ,,	*Opera House, Manchester*
,,	16th ,,	*Theatre Royal, Nottingham*
,,	23rd ,,	*New Theatre, Oxford*
,,	30th ,,	*Hippodrome, Bristol*
,,	7th Dec.	*Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon*

BALLET RAMBERT ON TOUR

W/c	26th Oct.	*New Theatre, Hull*
,,	2nd Nov.	*Arts Theatre, Cambridge*
,,	9th ,,	*Theatre Royal, Hanley*
,,	16th ,,	*Granada Cinema, Shrewsbury*
,,	23rd ,,	*Lyceum Theatre, Newport*
,,	30th ,,	*Alhambra, Bradford*

THE GEORGIAN STATE DANCE COMPANY

at the Royal Albert Hall, London

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at the Manchester Opera House commencing 30th Nov. (2 weeks)

FESTIVAL BALLET ON TOUR

21st-27th Oct. Falkoner, Centret Teater, Copenhagen.
30th Oct.-1st Nov. Statteater, Malmo.
3rd-8th Nov. Royal Opera House, Stockholm.

FESTIVAL BALLET AT THE ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL, LONDON

Christmas Season of *The Nutcracker* commencing 26th December

FESTIVAL BALLET CLUB

A Film Show at the Town Hall, Chelsea, 26th November, 7.30 p.m.

NEW BOOKS

Plaidoyer Pour Le Ballet Belge. By Lydia Chagoll. (Editions Lumière Bruxelles—Anvers).

Ballet is the Cinderella of the arts in Belgium, and in stating its case the author of this little book reveals a parlous state of affairs. Though much public money is lavished on the other arts and there is an Academy of Music and an École des Beaux Arts, there is no national school of ballet and no recognised controlling body—the most ignorant can and do set up as teachers with the direst results to their unfortunate pupils. Also such ballet that exists is usually attached to the opera and mostly reduced to a series of divertissements. Small wonder that good dancers and ballets are few and far between and the choreographer finds himself rather like a conductor without an orchestra. The prejudice against the male dancer is exceptionally strong.

A country gets the ballet it deserves, but already there are indications of dissatisfaction. Mme Chagoll is a writer and critic who does not mince her words and is very outspoken about the various present shortcomings, but she pleads passionately and constructively for better things in the future and, in pointing the way, perhaps the first step has been made.

Guide to Dance Periodicals Vol. I 1931-35. (*University of Florida Press*, $7.50.)

Year after year ballet magazines pile up on the bookshelves. Bound and in sedate rows or still in their glossy covers and not too tidy heaps, they contain a vast amount of invaluable material, for there is little appertaining to the dance that may not be found in their pages. A few contain indexes but most are lacking, and as the piles grow the student in his search for knowledge is increasingly daunted.

This Guide is in the nature of a comprehensive index for American and English magazines, and its purpose, as expressed by the compiler, S. Yancy Belknap, is to enable the scholar to locate articles and authors in the lyric theatre field, to aid him in tracking down exact details, and to provide him with names, dates and facts not readily accessible in the record of performance.

This latest edition is paradoxically the first, having been delayed for various reasons and because the early files of some magazines were not complete. In April 1955, when I reviewed Vol. V 1951-52 in these pages, the list of magazines included, of course, *Ballet Today* and the now defunct *Ballet*; but in Vol. I the *Dancing Times* represents the only magazine dealing with ballet then published in England. 1931-35 were very important years for English ballet, therefore it is fitting that Mr. A. H. Franks, the present editor of that magazine, should write the foreword.

Whether all gaps in the years are now closed and the series brought up to date I am unable to say, as delivery of the volumes at this office has been erratic.

A Colour Book of Ballet. Introduction by Arnold Haskell. (*Batsford* 12*s.* 6*d*).

I wish the pictorial contents of this book were equal to the Introduction. Though aimed at the reader whose knowledge of the history and aesthetics of ballet is comparatively slight, Mr. Haskell, under the headings of The Ballerina and the Classical Ballet, the Modern 'Classic' and The Dance Drama, has also written much that is stimulating and provocative to the specialist reader and all who wish for a deeper understanding of the art. But I am afraid that too many of the twenty-four examples of colour photographs are only illustrative of the great care needed in selecting this type of photograph for reproduction. For who can enjoy seeing his favourite ballerina looking like a boiled lobster, or as if recovering from an attack of jaundice, while atmosphere is certainly lacking when Giselle and Albrecht are, apparently, a couple of Mulattos. Retouching, too, is not easy in colour work, and the various signs of stress, the small physical flaws and sometimes, alas, the tell-tale traces of age, which vanish under the tactful brush of the retoucher in monotone, are often all too apparent in glorious Kodakchrome. The two pictures of Ulanova are captioned as being among the best colour photographs taken of her outside Russia. Both are poor, but the travesty which shows the ballerina with lips bared over clenched teeth and looking as if she was about to engage in a rugger tackle, should never have been included.

reviewed each month by . . . . . *PIGEON CROWLE*

RECORDINGS

SYLVIA

Ballet lovers are in great debt to the enterprise of Mercury, who have now followed up their complete recordings of the classics with Delibes' *Sylvia*, MMA11036-7. Items No. 16c, *Pas des Esclaves* and No. 16d, *Variation-Valse* from the Second Act are, in fact, omitted but otherwise it is delightful to sit back and follow a Fonteyn performance in the mind's eye. The L.S.O. under Fistoulari has been very well recorded and in the main do justice to the scores. No collection of ballet records can afford to be without these two.

PRINCE IGOR

This programme of Russian music from the Philharmonia Orchestra under the baton of Lovro von Matacic, Columbia 33CX1654, is outstanding and finely recorded. The suite from Borodin's *Prince Igor* ends with the Polovtsian Dances, so thrillingly choreographed by Fokine for Diaghilev and here excitingly piled up from one climax to another. Moussorgsky's *Night on a Bare Mountain* should make your blood run cold, while Rimsky-Korsakov's *Russian Easter Festival Overture* will leave you less prejudiced against it than you may have been before.

IN MEMORIAM

Nijinska used Chopin's *Fantasia in F minor* Op. 49 as part of the music for her ballet, *In Memoriam*, and the latest recording is by György Cziffra, HMV. ALP1713, with Schumann's *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12 on the other side. Two delightful works and many people speak highly of his interpretation but it has not the same appeal to me. Chopin's music, in spite of its difficulties, must come from the heart whereas here Cziffra seems content with technique as an end in itself and not simply the means. I feel this approach is far too prevalent nowadays.

CHOPIN'S WALTZES

These works have been danced by professionals and amateurs the whole world over, as solos or in normal length ballets, the greatest of which being, of course, Fokine's *Les Sylphides*. To hear them in their original form and at the hands of a pianist of Artur Rubinstein's calibre, RCA. RB16150, re-establishes one's confidence after some of the excruciating performances one has the misfortune to hear. With him, technique is but the means to an end and I am very glad to be able to add this attractive record to my collection.

LE BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME

Balanchine's ballet was set to the suite from Richard Strauss' incidental music for Molière's play. It is some of the wittiest and most enchanting music reflecting the seventeenth century. Sawallisch's conducting, Columbia 33CX1647, does not bring out all the subtleties in the score though generally it is a sound rendering. Included with it is a thoroughly good *Waltz Scene* from this composer's opera, *Intermezzo*.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Munch's performance with the Boston SO of Ravel's *Mother Goose Suite*—set by Cranko to his pas de deux, *Beauty and the Beast*—is not in my opinion, up to Giulini's inspired triumph. Nevertheless it is very good and thoroughly satisfying—praise which I give equally readily to the other two pieces on RCA. RB16155, Dukas' *L'Apprenti Sorcier* and Saint-Saens' *Le Rouet d'Omphale*. So if this is the concert of French music you are looking for, you need go no further.

Another interpretation of the *Mother Goose Suite* comes from Paul Paray and the Detroit SO, Mercury MMA11044. For me the other conductors have a far greater understanding of Ravel, and his phrasing is neither smooth nor subtle enough. Perhaps he does not believe in fairies and thereby the magical atmosphere does not come through to us ! Chabrier's gay little *Bourrée Fantasque*—used by Walter Gore—really needs the Beecham Touch and I am afraid Paray just misses it. However he includes Roussel's *Suite in F*, Op. 33 and Barraud's *Offrande à une ombre* which fill two gaps in the LP. catalogue and therefore have their interest. Recording very good.

reviewed each month by . . . *BEDFORD CROWLE*

BALLET TODAY BINDERS

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KNITTING PATTERN

If there is a future ballerina in your family, she will appreciate this Hugmetight for Christmas

HUGMETIGHT KNITTING INSTRUCTIONS

Back

5 oz. wool 3 ply. One pair of No. 9 needles.
94 sts. Knit into backs of sts. 6 rows of single rib.
Then stocking st. for 9 ins. up to armhole. Cast off 12 sts. each side. Knit st. st. for 6 ins. up to neck. Cast off remaining sts. all at once.

Right Front

89 sts. Knit into backs of sts. 5 rows single rib.
1st row. rib 6 k. to end of row.
2nd row. Purl to last 6 sts. rib. 6.
3rd row. rib 6. knit 2 tog. k. to end of row.
4th row. Purl to last 6 sts.
*Continue 3rd and 4th rows until there are 8 sts. after the armhole sts. have been taken off. When the side measures 9 ins. Cast off 6 sts. the 1st row, then 3 the 2nd row, then k. 2 tog. alternatively 3 times, taking off 12 sts. altogether, then work the side edge straight from now on. Continue decreasing inside the rib until there are 28 sts. Then work on until it measures 7 ins. from armhole. To shape shoulder cast off 8 sts. 1st row, 7 sts. 2nd row and 3rd row. Continue to rib the 6 rib sts. for 20 rows. Cast off.

Left Front

89 sts. k. into backs of sts. 5 rows single rib.
1st row k. to last 6 sts. rib 6.
2nd row rib 6 purl to end of row.
3rd row k. to last 8 sts. k. 2 tog. rib 6.
4th row. rib 6 purl to end of row. Then reverse the right front from *.

Sleeves

Both alike. 60 sts. k. into backs of sts. 6 rows single rib.
1st row k. plain increasing 1 st. at every 4th st. making 75 sts.
2nd row purl.
Continue with sts. for 4 ins. Then decrease 2 st. at the beginning of every row until there are 30 sts. left. Cast off.
Work another sleeve in the same manner.
Cast on 6 sts. work into backs of sts. work in single rib for about 15-16 ins. or length required. Work two pieces and sew them to points on the two sides. Join two pieces of ribbing on the fronts together and stitch to the back at back of neck.

Copyright of the Yvonne Academy, Wanstead. **Satria Pasha,** *our model for the hugmetight, is a pupil at the school.*

From the dance-drama *Fire Dancer* by M. Goleminov.

No. 4 IN OUR SERIES

BALLET AROUND THE WORLD

DOWN the ages the Bulgarian people have always expressed their dynamic spirit, their joys and sorrows, through rhythmic movement and the dance. The folklore patterns which have come down from the past show the unusually keen aesthetic sense of their unknown creators. But the cruel Turkish rule which lasted for five centuries in our country kept the national dance art in its initial forms till almost the beginning of this century. It was only in about 1907 that the first stage adaptations of national dances appeared, created to suit the requirements of the newly-formed opera in Sofia. Two tireless persons worked in this field—the gym teachers P. Radoev and R. Koleva. The study of classical ballet began considerably later, and even then it was often held in check by prejudices towards ballet which existed at that time.

In 1927 Anastas Petrov, just back from Germany, where he studied dancing, was appointed official ballet master and soloist at the National Opera in Sofia. His first production, the ballet *Coppelia*, was a great event.

Bulgarian professional ballet, which developed in the '30's, soon began showing contradictory trends. Various modernistic ideas permeated with decadence and pessimism appeared. Typical of that time was the production of *Swan Lake* in 1937 by Lydia Vulkova, a student of Wigman. The result was a curious mixture of classical and modern means of expression and was a far cry from the original ballet. In the same year another ballet was performed—*The Sleeping Beauty*, produced by the Russian ballet master Max Froman. In it the struggle against the dark, destructive powers was clearly, realistically and expressively stressed. The Bulgarian rulers of the day regarded it as a protest against fascism in our country and expelled Froman within 24 hours. In the struggle between these decadent and realistic trends, the latter came out victorious. In 1939 A. Petrov successfully staged the classical ballet *Raimonde*. Thus, slowly and under incredibly difficult conditions, the Bulgarian ballet progressed and gained experience.

Bulgarian ballet workers did not give up the idea of creating their own national works. In 1937 the first Bulgarian ballet *Yana and the Dragon* based on music by H. Manolov, was performed on the stage of the National Opera in Sofia. The second Bulgarian ballet *The Fire Dancer*, by M. Goleminov, performed in 1942, was of special interest. In the performance of the *Fire Dancer* a special choreographic language had been sought, based on elements taken from folk dances. This ballet was staged by Maria Dimova, an extremely talented choreographer, who was tragically killed in the air raids in Vienna in 1944. In 1942, M. Dimova staged the dance suites *Gherman, Trakia*, and *The Tale* by P. Stainov. M. Dimova's productions were full of the spirit of our folklore, and some of them, especially *The Fire Dancer*, are still full of impact and arouse great interest.

Together with the Bulgarian ballet producers, a whole generation of talented ballet dancers appeared, among whom Nina Kiradjieva and Lily Beron stand out as great artists.

After 9th September, 1944, Bulgarian ballet began to flourish rapidly. The state has taken full charge of the development of ballet in our country. The National Opera Ballet Company has increased to 80 people, and that of the Musical Comedy Theatre to 50 people. State Operas have been formed in the towns of Stara Zagora, Varna, Rousse and Plovdiv, and their ballet companies soon engaged in active creative work. In the period between 1944-50 in the Sofia State Opera performances of *The Fountain of Bahkchisarai, The Rivals, Dr. Oh-It-Hurts* and *The Red Poppy* were staged, and several gala

In the make-up room of the Sofia National Opera.

BULGARIA

by VIOLETA KONSOULOVA

concerts were given, each one representing a considerable stage in the development of Bulgarian ballet. The Ballet Company of the National Opera in Sofia worked at that time in creative co-operation with the Soviet ballet masters and teachers, N. Anissimova, V. Belii and N. Holfin, who decisively helped its technical and artistic growth.

In the production of *The Rivals* and *The Red Poppy*, the young ballet dancers Lyuba Koltchakova and Assen Gavrilov came to the fore and soon occupied leading places in the Ballet Company of the Sofia National Opera.

Anastas Petrov continues to work on the stage of the National Opera, and for his services to Bulgarian ballet he has been distinguished with the title of Honoured Artist. In 1948 he produced the ballet *Giselle*, in which the deep, lyrical charm of our eminent ballerina Lily Beron was again clearly brought to the fore. Another person who also devoted her efforts to the development of our ballet is Nina Kiradjieva, who had a special education in Moscow, and on her return worked on the performances of *Laurencia*, *Mirandolina* and the revival of *The Fountain of Bahkchisarai*. In 1951 the third Bulgarian ballet *Haidouk's Epic*, based on the traditions of the Bulgarian heroic epics, was produced. In the same year, the first Bulgarian State Ballet School was opened. Its first graduates have already become members of the six ballet companies in the existing musical theatres. Many of them take principal parts and the revival of *Yana and the Dragon*, the work of Honoured Artist A. Petrov, and the new production of *The Sleeping Beauty*, staged by the Honoured Artist of the RSFSR F. Balabina, are staffed almost entirely by young dancers. This third, the youngest generation of Bulgarian ballet dancers, has as its leading representatives K. Koldamova, K. Bogoeva, E. Korova, M. Lazarova, A. Samev, A. Stoinov, who have won international recognition and many prizes. The Ballet Company of the Sofia National Opera is now preparing new national works, such as *The Legend of the Lake*, based on music by the Bulgarian composer P. Vladigherov, and *Rhodopa* by the young composer Tsvetan Tsvetanov.

The other ballet companies in the country follow their own paths of development. For example, the ballet group at the Varna Opera performed the ballet *The Tartars* entirely on its own. Its plot is taken from folk traditions. The ballet company at the Stara Zagora Opera performed the ballet *Kurdjali* with great success. It describes the heroic struggle of the Bulgarian people against the Turkish oppressors. The ballet group of the Rousse Opera has given several concerts, where such important works as *The Afternoon of a Faun* by Debussy, and *Till Eulenspiegel* by R. Strauss, were performed.

Bulgarian ballet, with the knowledge and experience it has gained, is now beginning to show maturity.

Ballet Around the World
already published in this series:

Japan —The Komaki Company of Tokyo (June 1959)

Canada —The Royal Winnipeg Ballet (July 1959)

South Africa—The University Ballet Company of Cape Town (September 1959)

with Leo Kersley in *Carnaval* *Photo:* Helga Sharland

with Nicolai Fadeyechev in the Television production of *Giselle*, Act II. *Photo:* Houston Rogers

NADIA NERINA of the Royal Ballet was nominated as " ballerina of the year " in the 1959 Anton Dolin Awards.

LEO KERSLEY, the author of this article, partnered Miss Nerina when she first came to Britain. He played the lead role of the Lover when she danced her first solo role as Khadra in the ballet of that name at Sadler's Wells and also partnered her in *Sylphides*, *Carnaval*, *Spectre de la Rose*, and many modern ballets.

BALLERINA OF THE YEAR

by LEO KERSLEY

BECAUSE Michael Fokine has always seemed to me to be the outstanding choreographer of this century, it is perhaps only logical that my favourite dancer of the post-war generation should be Nadia Nerina. Since the days of Karsavina and Lopokova, it is hard to think of another ballerina so ideal in the Fokine roles, for Nerina is equally suitable to all three of the *Sylphides* dancers, to Columbine and Papillon; she was enchanting in *Le Spectre de la Rose*, and her performances in *Firebird* and *Petrouchka* finally broke down the reserve of even the most conservative of critics and won her the "rave" notices which she has been enjoying ever since.

That there was reserve towards Nerina's work on the part of a proportion of the audience, as well as the critics, cannot be denied, but it can be easily explained. Nerina is the first British prima ballerina who is not in any way relatable to her two great predecessors Markova and Fonteyn. She is an outstanding example of the type which first emerged in the person of the young Baronova in the early thirties; instead of the tragic, dark, static beauty which has typified so many ballerinas, Nerina has gaiety, lightness, elevation, and blonde colouring. In the thirties, Baronova was the ideal instrument for the Russian choreographers Massine, Balanchine, Fokine and Nijinska, and at that time the public was primarily interested in the modern repertoire; today the accent is on the old classics, and, largely because of her appearance and physical characteristics of movement, Nerina was dismissed as "soubrette type" and it has taken many years of extremely hard work on her part to convince audiences that a classical ballerina need not *per se* be tragic, dark and what could best be described as "glam, ham and sham." Nerina is never content to pose and dramatise about the stage as a substitute for dancing: she never stops dancing for an instant, and—what is equally important—she enjoys dancing and conveys to the audience her own passionate pleasure in what she is doing.

Here I must mention another important factor in the sudden general acceptance of Nerina's importance: the visit to London in 1956 of the Bolshoi Ballet. The Russian ballerinas, and in particular Struchkova, Bogomolova and Kondratieva, brought back to the stage of Covent Garden the expression of pleasure in perfectly controlled physical movement which Baronova and her contemporaries showed us in the thirties, and after the shouting and excitement died down, audiences and critics (coming rather sadly to earth) were in receptive mood to appreciate the extreme physical verve and enjoyment which Nerina invariably demonstrates when she takes the stage.

Nerina has never had an easy time on her way to the top. I hope she will forgive me if I describe her, when she first joined the Sadler's Wells Opera Ballet in 1946, as a plump little thing. Later on, when she had slimmed down, she suffered occasionally from exactly the weakness which hampered the very young Beryl Grey: she became what dancers call "lost in the movement"—indeed, one very prominent member of the Wells organisation said to me, shortly after Nerina joined the senior company, "I'm afraid Nadia will never get on, she's a marvellous dancer but she's *so* unmusical !" (I hope the person I have quoted blushes for shame when watching Nerina's magnificently timed and phrased dancing to such complicated scores as *Scènes de Ballet*.) Emerging at a period when the stage was full of young talent, she was never taken up by a famous choreographer, nobody revived a Markova ballet for her, and she was never in any way a "baby ballerina." She fought her way from the back row of the corps de ballet to the position of leading Resident Ballerina with the Royal Ballet entirely on her own efforts, a position which has been given added lustre by her choice as "Ballerina of the Year" by Anton Dolin.

Although Nerina's rise has been gradual (and how much more satisfactory this can be than to become a "star overnight"—and perhaps a nonentity once more three weeks later) it is still possible

in the Pas de Trois from *Swan Lake* (1948) *Photo:* Helga Sharland

in *Petrushka* *Photo:* Houston Rogers

to note certain milestones in her career. For me, the first was when, as the Country Boy in *La Fête Étrange*, I watched her, standing beside two other "young hopefuls" in a pas de trois for three girls, perform one movement: a very high *développé*, taken very slowly, with the supporting leg on the flat foot. Although Nerina's very nearly perfect control was strongly thrown into relief by the desperate wobbling of her companions, there was more to it than mere control; there was the beginning of the kind of wonderful inevitability of placing and timing which characterises the dancing of all great ballerinas. I shall never forget that *développé*; I can see it now—the beautiful delicacy of the stretched foot, the easy unstrained arm position and the proud lift of the head, the steadiness of the supporting leg. The next milestone was her Fairy Spring in *Cinderella*. It is always hard for a young dancer to open a classical full-length ballet in the first set solo—almost as hard a task as that of the unfortunate Radames who has to plunge straight into *Celeste Aida*—as countless Fairies of the Crystal Fountain can testify; late-comers are still ploughing down the aisles, imbeciles are peering at the programme instead of the stage, and the general atmosphere is chilly. Once Nerina burst into her dazzling cascade of *jetés* and *elancé* arabesques the audience's attention was riveted: she took to the vast stage as though she had been born for it, as indeed she was.

The third milestone was *Mam'zelle Angot*. If Nerina is the ideal romantic Fokine dancer, she is also admirably at home with Massine or Balanchine, and in this role, which can leave ballerinas physically sick with exhaustion, she sailed through with a touch of Struchkova's sparkle, with some of the wit of Danilova, and Baronova's technical brio—and with an ease and enjoyment borrowed from all three. Since then she has widened her scope to include all the big classical roles, she has taken over innumerable parts in works by almost every choreographer to have created for the Wells, and she has danced *Giselle* on television with the inimitable Fadeyechev, partner of Ulanova.

What is the particular quality of Nerina's dancing which has raised her to her present position and which distinguishes her from other attractive and well-trained young dancers of the Royal Ballet? I think it is the extreme clarity of her dancing. She never blurs or softens or weakens a movement, but is always at pains to make sure that every member of the audience can see exactly what she is doing, though never how she is doing it. It is undoubtedly this particular quality which makes her what is known as a "dancers' dancer": to anyone trained in the classical technique it is a never-failing delight to see a dancer using that technique with ease, pleasure and clarity. (I remember, to give only one example, Lopokova breaking the conventional *Sylphides* silence to clap enthusiastically after Nerina had danced the Waltz in Cambridge in 1948 or thereabouts. "I don't care," she declared defiantly, when hushed by the purists, "*I* know how difficult it is!") And in addition to this clarity and distinctness of movement, Nerina is expert at creating a mood and giving her characters personality: undistinguished in sequences calling for dramatic or formal acting she may be, but this gift seems characteristic of the more static or statuesque dancer and rarely the province—Soviet dancers excepted—of the vital, clear, springy type of dancer (Noverre's *arqué*, in fact). I hope that Nerina will shortly discover, or be discovered by, a choreographer who can appreciate and use her very special qualities, for while she continues to work in the shadow of her great predecessor Fonteyn she is bound to be at a disadvantage, for the eye of the public is so attuned to Fonteyn's special qualities, which are almost the diametric opposite of those of Nerina, that while she continues to dance Fonteyn's roles without creating new ones of her own she will have extra and unnecessary obstacles to surmount.

Of Nadia as a person, once one has discussed her dancing, there is not a very great deal to say, for to describe a person as entirely unspoilt, sweet and natural does not take many words and seems mere convention, though in fact it is strict truth. I still remember very many happy hours spent working with Nadia at the Wells in the early days of her career; always preoccupied with dancing, she would ask me to work with her to clear up some point about which she was worried—but she did not work for the sake of using up extra energy, she worked only until she felt right. Half an hour or four hours, she would work until the difficulty in question was in order, and then she would leave it alone until performance; and I imagine she is just the same today, for she always knows exactly what she wants to do and what she is doing, and hates to waste time. And, to prove once again the old point that a ballet dancer can never disguise the truth about herself on the stage, this brings me back to where I began. Fokine's ballets may be simple in comparison with some creations of today, but Fokine never wasted a step or a movement. And Nadia Nerina is the ideal Fokine dancer. What a pleasure if a new Fokine could appear to make ballets for her! And what a pleasure if a new Fokine could somehow contrive that she should appear with the one young male dancer of today with whom she is perfectly matched in style, technique and personality—John Gilpin. Every ballerina needs a complementary partner: where would Markova have been without Dolin, Fonteyn without Helpmann or Alonso without Youskevitch?

BACK

Yvette Chauviré with the sculpture of her by H. Yencesse

IN EVERY BIG CITY there is always at least one place to which all dancers eventually gravitate. In London it is to Cyril Beaumont's famous bookshop in the Charing Cross Road, in Paris it is to Madame Gilberte Cournand's bookshop in the Place Dauphine. Here amongst thousands of ancient and modern books on the dance Madame Cournand holds many varied ceremonies; paintings are exhibited, new books presented on publication, and homage paid to the work of great artists.

This year has been no exception and from 30th June to the 15th July an exhibition was held "In Homage of Yvette Chauviré". A statue of the great French ballerina sculpted by H. Yencesse was amongst the exhibits. On October 8th another important event took place, the annual presentation of Serge Lido's new book *Ballet No.* 9. The book will again be distributed in this country by Messrs A. & C. Black and will be available price 45/-, about the end of October.

FOR THE SECOND TIME in the history of the Royal Albert Hall the Corporation are to join in full partnership with Mr. Victor Hochhauser in presenting a Soviet Company. The first was the fabulous Ukrainian State Cossack Company, who gave a season in February last year, and now London is to see the Georgian State Dance Company from the Caucasus at the Royal Albert Hall from 9th until 25th November.

The Company of 80 is directed by three times Stalin prizewinner, Ilko Sukhishvili, and appeared in Paris last year. More recently a group of dancers from the Company made a number of appearances in the United States,* together with other Russian stars, but apart from these engagements, the

NTON DOLIN has had an extraordinary run of bad luck this year. Recovering from an attack of jaundice e had his house in London burgled, and now I hear from our correspondent in Monte Carlo that arriving ere on holiday in the lst days of September, Dolin dropped a heavy piece of marble on his foot whilst rranging his villa, breaking three toes. This necessitated a few days in Monaco hospital, in considerable pain. ol. Farrington continues: " though sentenced to ten days detention, he slipped away from the medicos and I ound him precariously bathing in the children's pool, skilfully manipulating the heavily bandaged limb from ie water, to the delight of the legitimate occupants."

It is no secret that Monte Carlo would welcome a visit from Festival Ballet again, or failing the whole company, some members as guest artists, particularly John Gilpin in *Le Spectre de la Rose*, which he danced there ome three years ago.

(Left to right): Anton Dolin, Marilyn Burr, Louis Godfrey, Wendy Farrington (daughter of Col. Farringdon, our critic in Monte Carlo) and John Gilpin on the Monte Carlo Beach Photo by: J. R. Farrington

Right:—
The Georgian State Dance Company from the Caucasus

TAGE

Company makes only rare appearances, abroad.

Specially chartered planes will bring the Company to this country, and they are to be accommodated in a Kensington hotel near the Royal Albert Hall, which has been taken over for this purpose. After the London season the Company will have a two weeks' season at the Manchester Opera House commencing 30th November.

Other attractions to be presented by Victor Hochhauser will include a visit by the Leningrad Kirov Ballet Company, and the ballet company from the Bolshoi Theatre as well as numerous Soviet instrumentalists and singers.

* *See Hope Sheridan's review on page* 20.

ANNETTE PAGE, seen above with husband Ronald Hynd, was promoted from the rank of soloist to the newly created title of "Junior Ballerina" of the Royal Ballet during the Company's two-week appearance at the Hippodrome Golders Green in September.

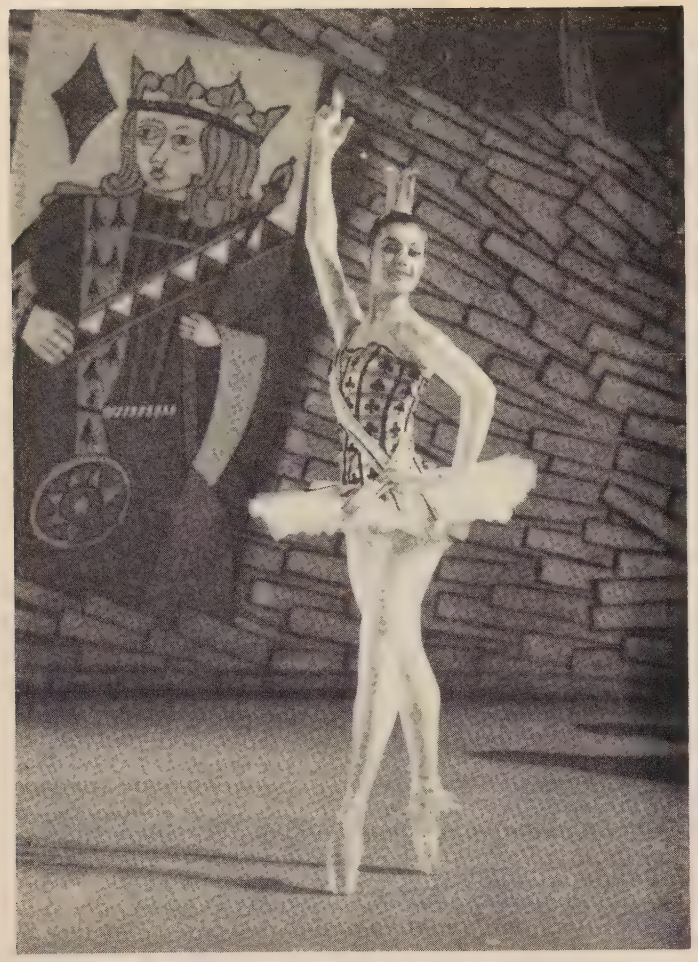
Miss Page, who was born at Didsbury, Manchester, gained an audition when the Sadler's Wells Company visited that city during the war, and was awarded a five-year scholarship by Ninette de Valois. She then joined the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet in 1950, becoming a soloist in 1954. The following year she became a member of the Sadler's Wells Ballet (now the Royal Ballet).

Husband and wife have danced together in a number of leading roles during the past year, notably *The Firebird, Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake.*

ALICIA MARKOVA appeared on television during October in the first of three Associated Rediffusion programmes entitled "Gala" featuring top international artists. Appearing in the same programme were opera star Maria Callas, Italian baritone Tito Gobbi, and Spanish concert pianist Jose Iturbi. Markova danced the Tyrolean pas de deux from "William Tell" partnered by Vladimir Skouratoff.

The following day Markova left by air for the United States on a short visit.

Right:
Our photograph shows Alicia Markova and Tito Gobbi chatting together during a break whilst making the tele-recording at Wood Green Empire.



Carla Fracci in *Jeu de Cartes*

with Mario Pistoni in *Don Giovanni*

CAREERS IN PICTURES

CARLA FRACCI

PETITE, shy and sloe-eyed, with tiny pearly teeth and a ready smile, five-foot-three Carla Fracci is the very picture of a baby ballerina, and the most exciting "find" that has emerged from Italy since the days when Italy led in the balletic field.

She wears her straight black hair Victorian-style à la Grisi, but her mobile face registers every change of mood and gives her an extraordinary range of expression. Hence she looks right even in sophisticated parts, although up till now she has proved the ideal interpreter of very young girls, as in roles like Juliet and Cinderella.

In private life she has a preference for tweedy dresses, high-necked, with wide, short skirts, and has not found these somewhat heavy materials oppressive even in the dog days of our exceptionally warm summer in London this year. Her svelte figure shows her clothes to perfection.

She is not averse to chocolates in her dressing room, and as yet has no need to take any particular precautions about keeping down her weight.

Carla Fracci commenced her ballet career in the school attached to the Scala, Milan, at the age of ten, her first teacher being Edda Martignoni. After five years training she was already taking her place in the corps de ballet, and the great moment arrived on New Year's Eve, 1955-6, when she made her debut in a leading part, being cast for the title role in "Cenerentola" (*Cinderella*). Her daintiness, plus assured technique, literally brought the house down, and launched her with flying colours on the road to stardom.

Other successes followed quickly, notably the feminine lead in *Romeo and Juliet*, Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, the Sugar Plum Fairy in *Casse Noisette* and the Young Girl in *Spectre de la Rose*. She danced the leading female role in Menotti's *Sebastian*; also in *Mario e il Mago*, *Jeu de Cartes* and *Secret*. Her culminating triumph, so far, has been in the title role of *Giselle*, which is her favourite ballet.

Partners? "I adore dancing with John Gilpin," she says. "He is so experienced and inspiring. In Italy I liked very much dancing with Mario Pistoni and Giulio Perugini, both excellent partners." One of her happiest memories is that of dancing *Spectre de la Rose* with John Gilpin on TV.

Carla Fracci considers her years of study by no means at an end. She still works very hard, when in Italy, with her English teacher, Esme Bulnes. I asked her if she had any special ambition. "First, I should like to become a great ballerina" she said. "That is my only ambition at present. Later perhaps I shall marry—but there is plenty of time for that. I just want to dance, and dance, and see the world."

Until she came to London this summer, her engagements have not taken her far beyond Italy. She has appeared with the Ballet in France, and also at the Edinburgh Festival, but her season in England with Festival Ballet gave her a real taste for travel, and she hopes to visit many countries with this company. "I like very much the English audiences—so warm and enthusiastic," she says.

When at home in Italy, she lives with her parents. They have a large modern flat in the centre of Milan—but, greatly to her regret, no garden. "No garden, therefore no little dog. I love little dogs," says Carla. And she likes flowers too, but has to content herself at home with tending house plants, of which she possesses a great variety. She is quite domesticated, and likes cooking, but her work in the ballet leaves her little time for practising domestic virtues. "Sometimes I cook the macaroni—it is quite simple" she says modestly. She does not design her own dresses, but she is fond of knitting, and makes her own practice tights and woollies. She is also very fond of swimming.

ELISABETHE CORATHIEL

in Cinderella (Cenerentola).
As Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet.*
all photos by Erio Piccagliani.

ROLES DANCED

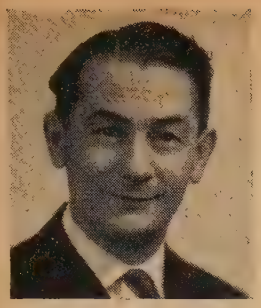
Giselle	in *Giselle*
Cinderella	in *Cenerentola*
Juliet	in *Romeo and Juliet*
Elvira	in *Don Giovanni*
The wife	in *Secret*
La Cortigiana	in *Sebastian*
Flower Lady	in *Jeu de Cartes*
Sugar Plum Fairy ..	in *Casse Noisette*
Fanny Cerrito	in *Pas de Quatre*
Young Girl	in *Spectre de la Rose*
Silvestra	in *Mario e il Mago*
Eva	in *Adamo E Eva*

with John Gilpin in *Harlequinade* (with Festival Ballet) *Photo:* Houston Rogers

TOKYO *The Eguchi-Miya Company in Mr. Eguchi's version of the Japanese folk dance* — The Dance of the Deers. Photo by courtesy of the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation Television Section (N.K.H.-T.V.)

NEWS FROM THE WORLD

BERMUDA *Ana Roje receives a bouquet on opening night.* Photo: Bermuda News Bureau



REPORT FROM **Tokyo** —BY JOHN HAYLOCK

THE DANCE OF THE DEERS

A MODERNISED JAPANESE FOLK DANCE

JAPAN is particularly rich in folk dances; there are many different kinds performed up and down the country. The dances are mostly connected with the sowing, transplanting, or the harvesting of rice, the staple food of Japan. The object of the dances is usually to propitiate the gods in the hope that there will be enough rain, no floods, and a bumper crop. As Japan becomes more and more modern, as cinemas and television invade the countryside, as the youth becomes more and more sophisticated, as old customs tend to become commercialised, these fascinating dances are on the decline.

Mr. Takaya Eguchi is a well-known dancer in Japan and with his wife, Miss Masako Miya, runs a company and a school—the Eguchi-Miya Company—that dances and teaches modern ballet. Mr. Eguchi first studied classical ballet in Japan and then in the 1930s went to Dresden to train under Mary Wigman. Mr. Eguchi is interested in studying Japanese folk dances and dancing them with his company to modern music and choreography. In this way he hopes to preserve some of the folk dances while at the same time making them more available and acceptable to the public.

Recently Mr. Nobuaki Ohkatsu of the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation Television Section (N.H.K.-T.V.) produced a programme called Japanese Folk Dances which consisted of a film of various folk dances in villages, and a live performance in the studio by the Eguchi-Miya Company of Mr. Eguchi's variation on a harvest dance from northern Japan called the *Dance of the Deers*. Mr. Eguchi and Mr. Akira Efukubé, a noted composer in Japan, studied this dance in the country district where it is held, and from their studies they produced the choreography and the music for the modern version.

For the *Dance of the Deers* the villagers wear uncanny masks: black, with huge owl-like eyes, snouts with square mouths and bared teeth; white antlers protrude from either side of the mask. From the mask hangs a black cloth with white spots that envelops the body, wide baggy trousers cover the legs. Each dancer has a drum tied round his waist and he holds a drum-stick in each hand; strapped to the backs of the dancers are two bamboo sticks bound with white paper, they are about nine feet long and tower over the dancers like immense horns (these sticks represent the weeds that grow among the autumnal rice). With such impedimenta one might think that dancing of any description was out of the question, but the peasants manage to do a vigorous if primitive circular jog interrupted now and again by drumbeats and by a bending forward and a beating of the sticks on the ground. The simple, rough folk dance steps were changed by Mr. Eguchi into a smoother and more rhythmic pace, more disciplined than that of the villagers, and the music was transformed into an eerie orchestral score that kept the firm beat of the original dance, and maintained the weirdness created by the masks and the bamboo horns. Mr. Eguchi and his dancers wore similar costumes to those worn by the villagers. The beating of the bamboo sticks on the ground and occasional sudden drumbeats in unison gave great dramatic effect. Mr. Eguchi's choreography followed partly that of the original dance but included movements and steps of his own. His ballet, that lasted for half an hour, had a slight story of the hind (Miss Miya) being hidden by the six younger deer and finally the stag (Mr. Eguchi) forcing the deer to give her back.

Mr. Eguchi told me after the dance, which I watched in the television studio, that he hopes to perform other ballets based on other folk dances. He is anxious to keep the sentiment of the original and to show the tremendous energy that Japanese folk dances have. Mr. Eguchi and Mr. Ohkatsu, the producer, deserve high praise for this programme, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Eguchi will be able to build up a repertoire on these exciting dances. His work, judging from the *Dance of the Deers*, seems to be thoroughly worthwhile.

MOISEYEV STATE BALLET

The Moiseyev State Ballet have just arrived in Japan for a five week visit and performed in Tokyo from September 27th-October 3rd. These lively Russian dancers are captivating audiences in Tokyo, as they have done before in Europe, America and the Middle East. Mr. Moiseyev does on a much bigger scale what Mr. Eguchi is attempting to do in Japan—he revivifies folk dances. The Russian programme is a delight; one is charmed by the freshness and vivacity of these dancers, and astounded by their amazing tricks: the high jumps, the leaps, the bounds, and especially the curious effect in *The Partisans* when the dancers in long voluminous greatcoats appear to glide along as if on wheels. The Moiseyev ballet does not seem to have added anything new to its repertoire since I saw them three years ago in Beirut. One feels that the field in this type of dancing is rather limited.

Ballet in Bermuda

FOR a number of years the great Yugoslav ballerina and teacher Ana Roje has divided her year between Split (where she heads the ballet company) and America (where she is in great demand as a teacher). But in 1958 she broke her journey between Europe and America to teach for a few weeks in Bermuda; and in August of this year, on the occasion of the 350th Anniversary celebrations in Bermuda, she was asked to produce a Ballet Week. In this way full-scale ballet came to Bermuda for the first time; and it was also Ana Roje's first stage appearance in the Western Hemisphere.

The difficulties she had to face in forming a ballet company and rehearsing the dancers in two complete programmes—all within a few weeks—were of staggering dimensions; in fact she found herself working from nine in the morning to midnight or later every day. The company of 31 consisted of some soloists whom she brought in from America and Split, together with a number of local dancers—most of whom were lacking in stage experience. The soloists from Split included the American-born Myles Marsden, his wife Herci Munitich, and the very promising young dancer Jelko Yuresha (who has recently been touring Europe with Belinda Wright). Another soloist was the Bermudian Patricia Gray, who had trained with Ana Roje in Split and New York. From America came Nanci Broomfield, Adam Darius, Vernon Gould, Richard Kemmler, Beverly Marlo, William Rivera and Phoebe Silver.

Performances were given in the Festival Theatre, an open-air theatre in Prospect Park built for the 350th anniversary play. The setting lent itself very well to many items of the repertoire—notably *Giselle*. The first programme consisted of *Second Movement, Fifth Symphony* (a new version of part of one of the most powerful ballets in the repertoire of the Split Ballet) and a complete *Giselle*. The main items in the second programme were *Faust* (the ballet scene in the Gounod opera) and five scenes from *Romeo and Juliet*. Ana Roje appeared in two of her finest roles—Giselle and Juliet. Myles Marsden danced the Youth (*Fifth Symphony*), Albrecht, Romeo and the Greek in *Faust*. Jelko Yuresha danced Destiny in *Fifth Symphony* (a difficult dramatic role in which he shows excellent promise), and Hilarion. The Bermudian dancer Patricia Gray was given a number of exacting roles: Queen of the Wilis, the main pas de deux in *Faust*, and a *Swan Lake* pas de deux. She shared the Queen of the Wilis with Herci Munitich, who also danced the major role of Love in *Fifth Symphony*.

The ballet performances attracted large audiences and were a great success with the public; inevitably the coming of ballet to Bermuda was a great occasion for Bermudians. But because of Ana Roje it had far more than local interest: in fact it attracted to Bermuda Anatole Chujoy, Editor of the New York *Dance News*.

FERNAU HALL.

SUMMER POTPOURRI

RUSSIAN MUSIC AND DANCE FESTIVAL

A HUGE assemblage of singers, dancers and musicians gathered at Madison Square Garden for a festival of Russian music and dance. Beginning July 7th, performances ran through the middle of the month. Surely this was the largest group of Russian folk talent ever seen in the United States. It provided a fitting prelude to the opening of the Russian Exhibition at the Coliseum.

Leaning heavily on different folk styles and musicians playing native instruments, the Festival nevertheless boasted a smattering of ballet also.

Featured were the dancers, singers and musicians of the Piatnitsky Russian Folk Choir, 100-strong, and dancers from the Georgian State Company, the Armenian State Company, the Kazakhstan State Company, and the Moiseyev Dance Company. The soloist roster included four artists from the Bolshoi Ballet who returned after their nation-wide tour of the United States. These were Nina Timofeyeva, Yuri Zhdanov, Liudmila Bogomolova and Stanislav Vlasov. Two soloists from the Mali Theatre in Leningrad, Tatiana Borovikova and Valery Panov were added.

Among the most memorable of the folk works I can recommend *The Fortress*, a folk dance for men performed by the Armenian State Dance Company, in which two lines of dancers, one atop the others' shoulders slowly move around the stage to form an enormous, swirling tower.

The Washerwoman danced by Tamata Zeifert and the soloists of the Moiseyev Dance Company is a charming adaptation by Igor Moiseyev of an old Moldavian folk dance which quite simply tells the story of how a clever and flirtatious washerwoman puts all her swains to work and so finishes her laundry.

There is also a *Gypsies Dance* of marvellous contrasts. Throbbing, rhythmic freneticism follows almost sensual languor. This too, was performed by the Moiseyev ensemble.

The Georgian State Dance Company is new to these shores and will certainly be remembered for their exciting number called, justly, *The Competition.* Every member of the company, brandishing either a whip or a sword, spins, does jumps on his knees or toes alike, performs pirouettes on his knees, dances on his incredible points, and generally acts like a ferocious, whirling dervish, but an exciting one. It is a performance guaranteed to bring down the house, and it did.

The Piatnitsky Folk Dance Company presented several varieties of the familiar courting dances and has a most engaging manner. They move gracefully from mischievous humour to dignity with equal facility.

Galya Izmailova, the graceful prima ballerina of the Uzbekistan State Ballet, provided us with a solo from Uzbek tradition, entitled *Zang*. There appears to be much of the Indian coloration in this dance language, although the torso itself has more freedom of movement.

A lively *Gopak* by soloists of the Kiev State Ballet should be mentioned in passing.

Kok-Par, a sporting dance performed by members of the Kazakh State Company, fills the stage with dancers costumed to imitate mounted horsemen. The padded shell of a horse is worn about the dancers waist with the dancer standing inside, his legs free but concealed by the horses' ornamental trappings. I have seen this done previously in ballet, where it had appeared ludicrous. Here it was both virile and exciting.

The weakest parts of the evening were the ballet numbers. Nina Timofeyeva and Yuri Zhdanov danced a pallid "Adagio" from *Swan Lake*. Tatiana Borovikova and Valery Panov from the Mali Theatre in Leningrad gave us a fairly unsteady Pas de Deux from *The Flames of Paris*. Panov, in particular, appears to be rather unfinished.

Liudmila Bogomolova and Stanislav Vlasov, alone, were the balletic standouts, performing breathtakingly a waltz filled with soaring leaps and light floating lifts. Dunayevsky's music is eminently danceable and Lapauri's choreography was calculated to leave the audience cheering for more.

The final week of the Russian Festival introduced a new programme with several holdovers from the week before.

Outstanding of the new works was a *Grand Pas* to choreography by Vakhtang Vronsky danced by Yelena Potapova and Robert Virizirenski-Klavin with the Kiev State Ballet. This was a work (very much in the style of the Krakowiaks from Glinka's "Life for the Czar") for soloists and corps in the best demi-character tradition with a classical Pas de Deux very deftly interpolated. Kiev style is somewhat softer than the Moscow style.

The Pas de Deux from *The Corsair* to music by Richard Drigo with Petipa's choreography revamped by Vakhtang Chabukiani found Tatiana Borovkova and Valery Panov in much better form. Not very much can be said for the pas itself, however. The form of the classical pas de deux was badly truncated leaving only a brief entrée followed by the male variation which showed mid-nineteenth century, pseudo-oriental influences, although strong bravura dancing was provided. The variation for the woman is colourless and the pas ends with a short, short, coda.

Shamil Yagudin of the Bolshoi Ballet gave us Ostap's Variations from the ballet *Taras Bulba*. Soloviev-Sedoy have provided a nicely embellished folk melody and Rostislav Zacharev has made it a thrilling variation for a virile dancer like Shamil Yagudin.

A Mountain Dance exhibiting the talents of the wild and frenetic toe-dancing Georgian State Dance Company offered us the solo talents of Nino Ramishvil who must have steel joints.

Both programmes were conducted by Gannadi Rozhdestvansky and Nicolae Nekrasov and were staged by Boris Pokrovsky.

BALLET RAMBERT

On July 14th, Ballet Rambert made its American debut at Jacob's Pillow, Massachusetts, as part of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. Ted Shawn's fine direction and foresight has carried the Festival into its twenty-seventh season with each season promising more than the last; a very noteworthy record for any impresario.

It is regrettable that we could not have seen the Ballet Rambert at a point somewhat earlier in its remarkable career. For this company which has been the cradle of so many fine English choreographers and dancers has certainly known better days.

I cannot comment on Ballet Rambert's entire season at the Pillow since I saw only the performances given on Saturday, July 18th. The ballets that day were *Laiderette* and *Giselle* given for both the matinée and evening performances.

Oddly enough, of the two it is perhaps *Laiderette* which shows the company off to its best advantage. An early work by Kenneth MacMillan, it is a commentary about the cruelty of fate and how each shall bear it through life like a stamp. In this particular case, it is the story of a young foundling whose ugliness is hidden by a mask and whose rejection by her lover, when the mask has fallen, is made more bitter once she recognizes that her problem is a lifetime one. Around this tale, like the figures in a maquillage, move a group of travelling comedians among whom are her parents; a grotesque mask-seller and a wealthy young man, on whose doorstep she is abandoned, and who is predestined to be the instrument of her heartbreak.

Frank Martin's raucous, disonant music seems to be almost too powerful for the poignancy of the theme and a bit too long. However, the decor and costumes of Kenneth Rowell have just the right degree of tawdriness and despair.

Although there are sections of *Laiderette* which as yet escape clear definition, the work is very definitely dramatic and moving. In the role of Laiderette, Lucette Aldous is touching. She moves with a natural dancer's grace yet with dramatic projection under perfect control. As the Host, John Chesworth contributes an excellent portrait of a young man in quest of pleasure and devoid of understanding. As the Mask Seller, Anna Truscott is ominously clairvoyant.

It is most unfortunate that the Ballet Rambert's *Giselle* followed so closely on the heels of the superb production by the Bolshoi. It is not possible to avoid making a comparison and the comparison is not a favourable one.

At one time, the Ballet Rambert no doubt had a production which ranked as one of the foremost in the Western World. Little can be said for that production today. Its scale is miniature, however that should not be held against it since miniatures can be superb. No, it is rather the depth of penetration which both its protagonists and its producer have given it. It is a painfully

Continued at foot of next page

SOVIET BALLET NEWS

From Nina Karasyova Ballet Today Correspondent in Moscow

THE MOLDAVIAN OPERA

In the Soviet Union there are 32 opera and ballet houses and several musical drama theatres that give ballet performances. Of late, many more new national ballet productions have been staged on historical and contemporary themes. The Moldavian Opera and Ballet Theatre presented its first Moldavian ballet, *Sisters*, to music by L. Kogan, and V. Angel's libretto. The ballet was staged by ballet master V. Boichenko and the decor for it was designed by K. Lodzeisky and A. Shubin. The young composer had made a comprehensive study of the musical lore of Moldavia, and skilfully woven the national melodies into his vivid and scintillating score for the ballet.

THE KIROV—LENINGRAD

The première performance of A. Petrov's *Shores of Hope* to a libretto by Y. Slonimsky, was produced by I. Belsky at the Kirov Opera and Ballet Theatre in Leningrad. The main roles in it are performed by A. Makarov, S. Gribov, T. Legat, O. Moiseyeva and N. Petrova.

KAZAN

A. Arensky's one-act ballet, *Egyptian Nights*, has had its first night at the Musa Djalil Opera and Ballet House of Kazan, and the Riga Opera and Ballet Theatre staged several one-act ballet productions, including *Bolero* to M. Ravel's music, *Chopiniana* and *Magic Dolls*.

BASHKIRIAN THEATRE

Another ballet première was N. Sabitov and K. Akhmetov's *Mountain Eagle*, devoted to the favourite hero of the Bashkirian people, Salavat Yulayev, at the Bashkirian Opera and Ballet Theatre. It was produced by K. Karpinsky, chief ballet master of the theatre, to the libretto of K. Safiullina and K. Karpinskaya.

KUIBYSHEV THEATRE

The Kuibyshev Theatre of Opera and Ballet recently presented its première performance of G. Kreitner's ballet, *Legend of Love* after Nazym Khikmet's play. Ballet master N. Danilov staged the performance to a libretto by G. Kreitner and N. Khikmet, and Y. Babichev designed the decor. The main roles are danced by I. Savelyeva (Shirin), K. Gavrilova (Mahmeneh Banu), N. Shchegolev (Ferhad) and V. Sergeyev (the Stranger).

NOVOSIBIRSK THEATRE

A Chinese ballet, *The Magic Lantern of Lotus*, (Paolianteng) was staged jointly by Russian and Chinese ballet masters, at the Novosibirsk Opera and Ballet Theatre. The libretto for it is based on a classical Chinese musical drama and a folk legend. The main role is danced by People's Artist of the RSFSR T. Zimina.

TATAR OPERA HOUSE

Two national ballets have been included in the repertoire of the Tatar Opera and Ballet House—F. Yarulin's *Shuraleh* after the poem by Turkai, and the satirical *Kisekbash* (The Severed Head) to R. Gubaidullin's music and A. Faizi's libretto. It was staged by the young ballet master O. Tarasova who has also produced a ballet for children entitled *Raushan* at the same theatre. The music for it was written by composer Z. Khabibullin, and the libretto by G. Salimov, based on Tatar fairy tales and stories by Gabdulla Tukai.

ODESSA

A new ballet production at the Odessa Opera and Ballet House is *Big Waltz* to Johann Strauss' music. It was staged by N. Tregubov.

TASHKENT

The Alisher Navoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Tashkent has produced the ballet *Masquerade* by the young composer L. Laputin, after M. Lermontov's drama of the same name. The staging was done by ballet master I. Smirnova to a libretto by O. Dadishkiliani.

BURYAT

The Buryat ASSR State Opera and Ballet House produced a Buryat ballet entitled *Angara the Beautiful* to music by L. Knipper and Yampilov. (Ballet master M. Zaslavsky, libretto by N. Baldano). Choreographer I. Moiseyev acted as Zaslavsky's consultant. Decor by M. Shestakov and A. Timin. In the main roles are Larisa Sakhyanova, and Tsiden Badmayev, stars of the Buryat ballet stage. The ballet's score is broadly based on Buryat folk tunes, the libretto is inspired by the legend of the love borne by Angara the Beautiful River to Yenisei the Giant River.

PETROZAVODSK

A new ballet production at the Petrozavodsk Musical Drama Theatre is *Sampo* by G. Sinisalo. This Karelian ballet was produced by I. Smirnov to his own libretto, and decor designed by A. Shelkovnikov. *Sampo* is the story of the people's struggle for their magic windmill "Sampo." An active part in the staging of the ballet was taken by graduates of the Moscow Ballet School Reshetnikova, Bobarikin, Medvedev, Gromov and Kovaleva.

AT THE BOLSHOI

The Bolshoi Theatre of the USSR has staged Kara-Karayev's *Path of Thunder* (ballet master K. Sergeyev), and *The Hunchbacked Horse* by Rodion Shchedrin (ballet master A. Radunsky).

Seventeen-year-old Yelena Ryabinkina, graduate of the Moscow Ballet School, has recently had her debut at the Bolshoi Theatre of the USSR in the role of Odette-Odile from Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*.

AMATEUR PERFORMANCES

Amateur ballet performances are staged all over the Soviet Union by choreographical groups, ensembles, and studios.

The amateur ballet studio of the Gorky Palace of Culture in Leningrad, for instance, has produced two ballets—A. Fridlender's *Stone Flower* and S. Vasilenko's *Mirandolina*. It has also presented its new choreographic production of a dance suite called *Roads and Ways* to D. Shostakovich's score (ballet master A. Obrant). The members of the group are mainly young workers, engineers and office employees

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HOPE SHERIDAN'S REVIEW (*Continued from page 20*)

thin production, at times almost transparent. Unless the interlocking relationships of Giselle, her mother, Albrecht, and Hilarion are credible, the whole ballet become a 19th century rocking-horse.

In the roles of the two principals, Giselle and Albrecht, Beryl Goldwyn and John Lyall are no more than adequate. Norman Morrice as Hilarion has turned the character into a heavy-handed villain of the "two pence plain and many coloured" variety. Valerie Marsh, John Benfield, John Chesworth and Gillian Martlew furnish the principals with support. The best dancing in the production is turned in by Lucette Aldous in the Peasant Pas de Deux of Act I. Hugh Stevenson's costumes are somewhat sharp although his scenery is more successful in capturing the Romantic mood of the ballet.

THEATRE IN THE PARK

New York City's Hudson Celebration Theatre-in-the-Park was officially opened by Newbold Morris on July 15th. It was built to provide New Yorkers with their first open-air "in the round" stage in Manhattan. Designed by Edward D. Stone, the summer theatre is lovely to look upon, but not exactly the best home for ballet. André Eglevsky's Ballet Divertissements opened the theatre with a group which included some of the best dancers in the field; Melissa Hayden, Allegra Kent, Edward Villela, not to mention Mr. Eglevsky himself. However, the problem of ballets designed for a proscenium-equipped stage immediately present themselves. There is always one section of the house that is seeing the work from a physically wrong angle.

The problem was not alleviated to any great degree with the appearance of an even larger group in the form of the Ballets Russe de Monte Carlo who opened there for one week, August 10th through 18th. Even the talents of Alicia Alonso, Igor Youskevitch and Natalie Krassovska as guest artists, and regulars Nina Novak, George Zoritch, Irina Borowska and Alan Howard can not make ballet more than a onesided success in the circular stage. A few of the numbers restaged by Miss Novak showed, to a better advantage but for the most part, ballet-blanc needs a definite shell-like backing to keep it from dissipating its kinesthetic and aesthetic climaxes.

The World Dance Festival, which for the most part, was a collection of ethnic dances, provided much more suitable fare for the oval-housed audience. The one non-ethnic, but highly theatrical work of the evening, Alvin Ailey's *Blues Suite* successfully utilized the few advantages theatre-in-the-round has to offer. We peered into the dimly-lit, smoke filled cabaret atmosphere of New Orleans jazz and came up satisfied.

Haitan dancers, Flamenco, Hebraica, Watusi, and Ceylonese Dancers showed to fine advantage as well. Perhaps, this is where theatre-in-the-round may come into its own.

Continued on page 24

AUSTRALIAN REVIEW

by PAUL MOULDS, Ballet Today Correspondent in Brisbane

LAST July it was announced that Australians would be having a visit from members of the Bolshoi and Kiev Shevenko Ballets. No details were given as to whom we might expect and speculation was rife. Later on, when it was stated that soloists from the two companies would be making a capital cities tour of Australia and New Zealand in August, excitement was at fever pitch, and people tried in vain to find out where they could book seats. The day before they were due to arrive in New Zealand it was announced that for unknown reasons the Soviet Government had cancelled the tour. Hopes dashed, ballet fans were ready to slit the throat of any Soviet official who should be at hand. However, a week later the dancers left Russia headed for Australia. They arrived here on 28th July, opening their Melbourne season on Friday the 31st. From that night on they were acclaimed at every performance. Critics raved as never before and judging by their standard we can only guess how marvellous the whole company can be.

After nine days in Melbourne they came to Brisbane where they were to have opened their Australian season. They danced at the newly opened Festival Hall, an auditorium with seating accommodation for 5,500 people, but having a stage about sixty feet wide and only 30 feet deep, a ridiculously small area for any group to dance on. Needless to say, the Hall was packed with 6,000 people at each performance, sitting in the stairways and passages, some standing along the back of the galleries. All tickets were sold a day after the bookings opened and thousands of people had money, which they had sent by post, refunded. They queued at the Box Office for hours before each performance in the hope of cancellations, while tickets were changing hands for upwards of ten pounds. The Management must be congratulated on the reasonable prices of original bookings, the most expensive seats being thirty shillings while hundreds of seats were obtainable at ten shillings. Nevertheless, the Festival Hall in Brisbane is a very unsatisfactory building for stage work, especially as the seating is best arranged for viewing a performance taking place in the area in the centre of the building. If more time had been available, Her Majesty's Theatre, where the Royal Ballet were housed, would have been more suitable.

The Group comprised six men and six women, the leading women being Nina Chkalova and Susanna Zvyagina and the men were headed by Yuri Kondratov. They presented a selection of excerpts and short works from which it is always difficult to form an opinion of dancing merit. They brought no scenery and no orchestra, their own pianist Alexey Zybtsev accompanied them. Most popular was *Walpurgis Night* already familiar to Australians who had seen the English Bolshoi film. Outstanding in this work was Esfandiyar Kashani—as Pan. His name appears at the bottom of the cast list but he is certainly the most outstanding of the men. His mime is clear and has much inner feeling, while his dancing is light yet muscular, his lifts are unequalled and executed with ease and perfect balance. Like all the other men he is very solidly built, much heavier than our men or the Royal Ballet dancers but he moves through the air with graceful ease, his elevation is exceptional and he does indeed sometimes seem suspended in space. Yuri Kondratov as Bacchus merely walked around looking very much overweight and occasionally taking part in lifts of which the Russians seem to be particularly fond. Most of the ballet we saw was liberally sprinkled with these spectacular lifts, especially those lifts at full arms length above the head. The women were very good but Nina Chkalova as Bacchante was outstanding. This dancer who, incidentally, when seen close up, appears to be quite old as ballerinas go, has a young-girl brilliance and combines a superb stage presence with technical virtuosity. Altogether, this was definitely the most exciting and satisfying item on the programme.

First on the programme we had seen the Adagio from *Swan Lake* with choreography by Ivanov. This was very beautifully danced by Rimma Karelskaya, a very delicate dancer of great technical purity but it was not to be compared with Dame Margot's performance of the same item in Sydney 1957 !* That was something Australians will never forget. Second up was the Polonaise from the Opera *Ivan Susanin* and we had our first look at Susanna Zvyagina, a very good folk dancer but not seen at her best in this excerpt with its rather clumsy choreography which was meaningless torn from its context. Next, we were treated to a new version of the *Nutcracker* pas de deux. The choreography by Vainonen gave us some unusual lifts which seem rather out of place here and it is altogether dreary compared to our own version. The prince was far from charming, being a mild, balding gentleman who was very unsteady in his lifting work and who seemed quite mentally detached from his partner. Nina Fedorova as the Sugar Plum Fairy was very beautiful with very steady turning arabesques when not hampered by her partner. The lack of an orchestra was most noticeable here, as the orchestral build-up to each exciting choreographic highlight has much to do with the successful presentation of this pas de deux. A violin, cello, piano and drums are definitely not adequate even when superbly played. *Nutcracker* is a ballet favourite in Australia and you have to go a long way to see better than Borovansky's production.

A Russian Folk dance *The Little Swan* was next on the programme. The many shuffling steps and quick travelling in the high heeled shoes were so well done that it looked just so easy to perform. The costume was gorgeous but the dance seemed a little too slow, and it wasn't until the end that the tempo altered to suit. A Mountain Dance by Mansur Kamaletdinov followed and the audience always liking the spectacular, stamped the floor for an encore. This was the typically fiery Russian style, much of the work being done in a crouching position. This man has polish and the ability to win over the audience even with technically simple work.

The second half of the programme opened with the third act from *Fountain of Bahkchisarai*, again familiar to Australians. This was a bit obscure, when separated from the whole and the dancers didn't seem to get over the feelings involved, the mime seeming stiff and meaningless. Nina Chkalova was the only outstanding dancer in this ballet excerpt. The lyrical dance which followed was from the ballet *Mirandolina* and Susanna Zvyagina, looking very Spanish, gave a dazzling performance. The *Don Quixote* pas de deux by Margarita Smirnova and Gennady Lediakh allowed a direct comparison with the Royal Ballet Company's recent performance by Rowena Jackson and Philip Chatfield. Frankly, it was disappointing, and in no way came up to the latter couple's performance. Rowena Jackson, especially when partnered by Bryan Ashbridge, gives this pas de deux a stamp of her own and I have yet to see a Russian to equal her verve and precision, especially in the fouettes. From the *Gayaneh* Ballet we saw variations danced by Kashani, a not so good jumping exhibition. It could have been quite exciting but somehow he seemed to get wrapped up in a particularly ungainly series of leaps which while tiring for the dancer also soon tired the audience.

A Moldavian Dance with Larisa Trembovelskaya and Mansur Kamaletdinov was the best folk dancing of the evening. Both spirited and lyrical this dance showed off these two dancers to excellent advantage. To end the programme we were treated to an exciting Valse, music by Moshkovsky, choreography by Vainonen. This is obviously a fireworks exhibition, but the dancing has the utmost in timing and precision. We saw some of the most fantastic lifts possible. Nina Chkalova leaps into her partner's arms to be spun in a triple turn then into a fish dive. She also leaps over half the stage, Gennady Lediakh catching her in a beautiful fish dive lifting her from this to above head height to carry her to the centre of the stage. Nina Chkalova's footwork is so quick and light as to be almost a blur and she appears to thoroughly enjoy every moment of it. Lediakh is a wonderful partner of obvious strength and yet very light on his feet. Altogether a terrific finale ! The evening left us with appetites whetted for the

Continued on page 24

* An article on Fonteyn's Australian tour was published in our November, 1957, issue.

Too Few Tutus

From Roy MacGregor-Hastie in Italy

IT is one of those paradoxes which defy resolution that Holland, a country popularly notable for the immensity of its bicycles and consumption of potatoes, has several permanent ballet companies, and Italy, renowned for the beauty and natural grace in motion of its women, has none. South of the Alps there are only the corps attached to the Scala, Milan and the State Theatres in Rome and Naples—an inexplicable poverty when one remembers the importance of La Scala in the development of the Diaghilev attitude to the dance.

In the context of scarce means, Susanna Egri's importance is trebled, her vitality incomparable. Born in Budapest and schooled at the Royal Opera House there, she came to Italy still a girl and full of Hungarian enthusiasm; she would, she thought, achieve a synthesis of the art forms with a nucleus of the art of movement and reorientate the interest of the Italians, redirect it from Traviata to a twentieth-century *Giselle*. She began, in the years immediately post war, dancing roles she had choreographed herself, on the theme of a poem she felt matched her prevalent mood; the theatres in Milan and Turin where she was given her first engagements were interested, filled, then emptied for want of a ballet tradition on which to base experiment. From Milan to the Fenice Theatre, Venice as a principal dancer and her first tour of Northern Europe —London, Paris and Berlin; then to the Florence Opera again as prima ballerina, all the time her reputation growing and her own individual interpretation of classical roles becoming more widely appreciated and understood—so much so that in 1949 with the beginning of Television in Italy, she was asked to organise the first tele-dance spectacles "Oh, those golden days," she said to me when I saw her in Turin recently, "when we could ask for and get two or three hours for a full length production of any ballet in the classical repertoire !" The golden days didn't last. There is only one television network in Italy, the state owned RAI, and the powers that be soon realised that here was a medium which would be scrambled for by advertisers—exit the full length ballet. Nevertheless, a certain amount of viewing time is still given to whatever dance sequences Egri decides are the best compromise between "teaching the calypso" (the latest suggestion from Rome) and the second Act of *Giselle*; and in a country where there is only one magazine devoted to the dance, and that appearing infrequently, the publicity value of a television half hour in the cause of propagating an interest in ballet is inestimable. Egri has even succeeded in tentatively achieving her "synthesis," in using the resources of TV for an amalgamation of the spoken word in verse, music painting and the dance all of which has endeared her to artists working in other genres and guaranteed their support for whatever venture she may sponsor next. Probably the most notable success in this "synthesis" was her *Chagalliana*, a fable-ballet choreographed by Egri out of Marc Chagall's paintings, with music written for it by a young Torinese, Sergio Liberovici; it was the production of this ballet on the RAI network and its subsequent transfer to the Teatro Alfieri (Turin) that established the international reputation of Susanna and her temporary companies—the seven ballets she wrote in 1954 were taken into the repertoires of Lage Landen in Holland (first !) and of French, Spanish and American companies, and invitations to appear all over Europe began to pour into her newly-founded ballet school. Her partners—Canadian Norman Thompson, Albertini, Testa, Boris Trailine, Brigo took her to a well-deserved esteem outside the Italy she works in, a dedicated slave.

Incontro (Prokofiev-Egri) and the dance drama *Istantanee* (Arma-Egri) 1954-55 did nothing to diminish her reputation. After one more ill-fated attempt to found a permanent ballet theatre in Turin, she has concentrated on choreography and dancing for TV, touring for two months of the year and using the money she earns to put on experimental dance drama and contemporary ballet at the Alfieri and Piccolo Teatro. Her studies with expressionist masters, Harold Kruydsberg and Mary Wigman and her admiration for the José Limon and Martha Graham companies, have made her more than ever determined to create a dance which will be accessible to the lay Italian public, though firmly founded on a classical tradition, for which there is no substitute.

The growing strength of British Ballet (Egri is a great admirer of Fonteyn) impressed her when she came to this country with the Biennial National Theatre Company to dance at the Cambridge, interpreting *Oedipus* Rex front stage as it was acted formally centre stage. What she is trying to do above all is to assist at the birth of that nucleus of balletomanes and (often) enthusiastic ballet illiterates to which *we* owe a great deal; it is a tragedy that her efforts go unnoticed and unapplauded, that she has so little help and an enthusiastic audience only when she adapts (waters down *denied*) a photograph of Ulanova to the tastes of a television audience already reduced to amiable idiocy by mines of useless information. But, as she says, the occasional oversight by a programme controller which allows her the freedom to experiment and make an intelligent appeal will, perhaps, one day be more than a rewarding experience in itself.

Susanna Egri

HOPE SHERIDAN FROM NEW YORK (Continued)

NEW YORK CITY BALLET

THE New York City Ballet began its 11th consecutive year of dancing at the City Centre on August 25th. The company presented four weeks of repertory ballets and a revival of the Francisco Moncion-George Balanchine *Jeux d'Enfants*. The season was to have heralded the return of Maria Tallchief as guest artist and the first appearance of Royes Fernandez as a principal dancer with the company. As if to set the tone for the season, neither artist performed. Maria Tallchief's visit was cancelled, owing to the grave illness of her father and Royes Fernandez injured his leg.

The company opened with a listless performance of *Gounod Symphony* and only redeemed itself in the clever *Agon*. The extreme youth of the company is everywhere apparent, too apparent. The Balanchine repertoire is made for young dancers, but a surfeit of youthful, scrubbed faces and boyish charm can reveal the nature of this company's weakness: to wit, the absence of a dancer of true ballerina quality or a first danseur worthy of the name. Nor does the active repertoire boast any ballets *requiring* mature artistry. Frankly, I am tired of colt-like Odettes in *Swan Lake*. Perhaps the Bolshoi has spoiled me for anything more frequent than an occasional teenage romp.

The 'new' ballet of the season was a revised version of *Jeux d'Enfants*. The work is still set to the music of the same name by Bizet and is still dressed in Esteban Frances decor and costumes. In 1955 when *Jeux* was first performed, it was not a success. That status has not been altered. The ballet is essentially the same as before—a series of disconnected dances and vignettes concerning toys' relationships to each other. It has neither wit nor humour. It does not even provide opportunities for the individual dancers to show their talents. However, there is one nice sequence for cut paper dolls and the scissors. The pas de deux for Roy Tobias as a toy soldier and Allegra Kent as the Doll whom he loves, was neither charming nor inventive. Why must all dances with dolls feature their most grotesque characteristics: stiffness, rigidity, etc. It's old hat by now. In its present form *Jeux d'Enfants* is poor entertainment for young or old.

ROBERTO IGLESIAS AND HIS BALLET ESPAÑOL

On September 23rd, Roberto Iglesias and his Ballet Español opened a short, two week engagement at the Winter Garden theatre. Mr. Iglesias' strength lies in his capacity to project and build around his own dramatic personality. When he was busy telling the story of Garcia Lorca's *Soledad Montoya*, the essence of the Gypsy poems was distilled and volatile. He turned a canto duet about two impassioned lovers into sexual frenzy and volcanic theatre. His partner in this episode, Rosario Galan, was his dramatic equal. Guitarist Felix de Utrera and cantaor Pepe Segundo were expertly used to heighten tension. If there were any reservations about this piece, it was that Mr. Iglesias had a tendency towards vulgarity. Overstatements about sex often detract from rather than add to a climax.

Esperanza Galan, Rosario's sister, was a highly professional performer and provides excellent balance to the programme with an exuberant, earthy and humorous *Dona Frasquita*. Again, in teaming with Antonio Espanol, she brought a mischievous wit to bear in a Mexican dance, stylized like an old engraving of tropical Veracruz, *El Palomo y la Paloma*.

The big work of the evening, *Corrido*, somehow went awry. This ballet with libretto, scenery and costumes by Xavier Lavalle and music by Armando LaValle, was choreographed by Mr. Iglesias and Marcelo Torreblanca. It tells an old Mexican story of Jose and Lupita who grow up together and plan to marry. When Jose leaves the village to seek his fortune, Lupita promises to wait for him. Her father, however, forces her to wed a rich, old man. On her wedding night, Lupita flees from her drunken, sleepy groom and meets Jose. They are discovered. In the tragedy which follows, Jose is killed and Lupita goes mad. Vaguely reminiscent of Lorca's *Blood Wedding*, *Corrido* had all the elements present for a first rate story. However, the dramatic development was never fulfilled and the characters themselves, never more than suggestions, and banal suggestions at that.

Gaditanas provided Mr. Iglesias with some fine heel and toe variations utilizing the basic flamenco steps.

For the three ensemble numbers, Mr. Iglesias was guilty of perpetrating an old crime which should be exorcised from all directors of Spanish troupes. He insisted upon mixing Spanish technique with ballet steps. The result is always bad ballet and bastard Spanish.

Ana Mercedes in two numbers: *El Albaicin* and *Leyenda*, both to music by Albeniz, proved herself an artist of stature. Her style was closer to the classic mould and while she abjures the most histrionic extremes of some of her colleagues, she, nevertheless, was capable of holding and moving an audience.

As for Mr. Iglesias himself, I do not find him an attractive performer. His body is not ideally suited to Spanish style for he inclines towards chunkiness and a fairly sway posture. The true tautness of the physical line which one seeks in Spanish technique is lacking. Mr. Iglesias' other flaw is of a much different nature. He takes himself with a seriousness bordering on ferocity. Too bad, a little humour could alleviate the monotony.

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AUSTRALIA—*Continued from page 22*

time when it will be possible for a visit by the whole Bolshoi Company. Most impressive was the muscular masculinity of the Russian males, the most outstanding being Esfandiyar Kashani and Mansur Kamaletdinov. Nina Chkalova won many Australian hearts and we loved the purity and softness of the dancing of the Russian females we saw. Their varied styles of acknowledging applause are most appealing, especially their clapping of the audience to show they appreciate *your* applause and their stage presentation is altogether very gay.

The second night unfortunately was not as scheduled and was a repeat of the first night's programme. As the company left, thousands of people poured into the street outside the stage door to see them off. The traffic in the street ceased to flow as people jammed the roadway. The dancers battled their way to the waiting cars and left among cheering crowds. We hope that they felt a little of the warmth Australians had for them, and that they will return in full strength in the near future.

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Class at Madame Preobrajenska's

by **INGEBORG ZÜRNER**

To the sound of a piano in a Paris studio young dancers train under Preobrajenska, famous ballerina in the days of Imperial Russia.

EVERY day at 12 o'clock a tiny lady, already in her black ballet slippers, climbs the narrow, winding staircase that leads up to room No. 8, where for almost four decades Madame Preobrajenska has given her classes. Before the lesson begins, she picks up a little watering can and sprinkles the floor along the barre. And she insists on doing it herself.

The first thing she will correct in an RAD-trained dancer is the position of the hands. Thumb and middle finger have to be closed to form a circle and the palm is slightly turned down. This closed position of the fingers allows the dancer later on, in centre practice, to suggest a sense of breadth of movement by simply opening the hands when passing through " gateway " or first position. Madame also insists on the pupils controlling themselves with the help of the mirror, which they are to fix continually whatever they are doing. This provides them with a sense of direction which afterwards, on the stage, allows them greater freedom. Throughout the class the greatest attention is paid to the musical phrasing of each exercise, and if someone does not succeed in finding the right rhythm, Madame jumps up from her chair and, holding on to the piano, demonstrates the exercise, exclaiming: " Mais Mademoiselle, je vous en prie, faites comme moi."

With infinite patience she explains each movement and works on a step, until she considers to have attained the highest degree of perfection of which the respective pupil is capable. And here, I think, lies the great difference between her way of teaching and that familiar in our Western ballet schools: From the very beginning Mme. Preobrajenska works on the simplest steps until they are perfect and worthy of a ballerina in technique, line, musical phrasing and expression. Quite frequently she forgets all about an enchaînement, to get some detail of the first movement right. Only then will she go on to the next step. Thus in Mme. Preo's class an accomplished dancer may find himself working on a pas de bourrée alongside a young ballet student, and deprived of any opportunity to show his superior technique. " D'abord il faut travailler la qualité, pas la quantité ", Madame will say. " You must understand a movement, then love it, and then the feet will execute it all by themselves. The dance must begin in your head, then descend to your heart and from there it will gradually reach your legs and everything will be right ".

In the Western world ballet students are above all interested in acquiring a strong technique, and only after having reached this aim attention will be paid to the expressiveness of the face and the fingertips. It is only the real artist who has still patience enough to work out these last perfections, which are almost imperceivable and yet all-important.

Often Madame leaves her pupils with one or two bars of music to fill in themselves with a step or gesture at the end of an enchaînement, or she sets a very simple sequence of mime. This is to foster artistic expressiveness and help to overcome initial timidity. She is not very keen on a pupil doing the exercises with an absolutely impassive face. She will try everything to make her smile, even make all sorts of faces, and having reached her aim, she will say, smiling radiantly herself: " Thank you. Don't be cross with me, it is no good. I insist on details, perhaps I annoy you by that. But it has got to be right, you must understand the movements. I love to work hard." Often a class will go on until long after 2 p.m. and when at last it is over and the dancers thank Madame with a curtsey, she will kiss them on both cheeks saying: " Now go home and take a rest and forget me and my voice."

But who would not, on the contrary, cherish the memory of Madame Preobrajenska, this charming, warm-hearted personality and most exacting and inspiring teacher, whose eyes never fail to spot a fault, who never tires in correcting it and whose greatest pleasure it is to pass on as much as possible of her infinite knowledge of the art of ballet to the young generation.

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